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Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Tuesday, December 10, 2013



Storm snarls travel; power outages persist

The White House is reflected in the driveway by melting snow and ice in Washington, Monday, Dec. 9, 2013.

(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

JOSHUA FREED
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) -- Snow and bitter cold snarled traffic and prompted another 1,650 U.S. flight cancellations on Monday, and tens of thousands of people were still without power after January-like weather barged in a month early. The storm covered parts of North Texas in ice over the weekend and then moved East. Below-zero temperatures crowned the top of

the U.S. from Idaho to Minnesota, where many roads still had an inch-thick plate of ice, polished smooth by traffic and impervious to ice-melting chemicals, making intersections an adventure.

Many travelers wished they were home, and people in homes without power wished they were somewhere else.

Some of the most difficult conditions were in North

More than 22,000 Dallas-area homes and businesses were still without power on Monday, according to electric utility Oncor. That was down from 270,000 on Friday. Dallas students got a snow day.

More than half of the nation's flight cancellations on Monday were at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, dominated by American Airlines.

About 650 travelers were stranded there Sunday

night.

Nationally, there have been more than 6,100 flight cancellations since Saturday, according to FlightStats.com, including more than 2,800 by American or its American Eagle regional airline. American emerged from bankruptcy protection and merged with US Airways on Monday.

A flight cancellation meant that Fred and Brenda Mull of Oklahoma City spent

Sunday night in a Dallas hotel instead of Cabo San Lucas in Mexico. American canceled their Monday morning flight, too, and they weren't happy as they sat in the international lobby.

They'd spent three hours on hold with American, which told them not to go to the airport or search for a new reservation — advice they ignored.

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World leaders to speak at massive Mandela memorial

JON GAMBRELL

JUERGEN BAETZ

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) —

South Africa prepared Monday for a massive memorial in a soccer stadium honoring Nelson Mandela, where an eclectic mix of world leaders will eulogize the anti-apartheid icon before a crowd of nearly

"He really was like a magician with a magic wand, turning us into this glorious, multi-colored, rainbow people," said Tutu.

At the Soweto stadium where Mandela made his last public appearance at the 2010 World Cup, workers busily constructed a stage protected by bulletproof glass for Tuesday's

to be the first ones inside. Authorities expect overflow crowds to watch the event at nearby stadiums as well, saying they'd shut off access if the crowds grow too large.

Officers will direct traffic, protect mourners and help the bodyguards of visiting dignitaries, Lt. Gen. Solomon Makgale, a spokes-

tend the ceremony. Makgale said police were prepared for Tuesday's event, which also will include speeches from Mandela's family and friends.

"Whether we have 10 heads of state coming or 70 or 100, we do have the capacity and plans in place to facilitate their movement," Makgale said.

United States President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle left Washington for Johannesburg aboard Air Force One on Monday. In a rare get-together, they were joined by former President George W. Bush, his wife Laura and former first lady Hillary Clinton. Former Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter are traveling separately to South Africa. A program released by the South African government showed Obama would speak, as would United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao. Other speakers include Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba, Indian President Pranab Mukherjee and Cuban President Raul Castro. South African President Jacob Zuma will give the keynote address.

Though security remains a concern, an AP reporter walked unsearched into the stadium Monday by showing only a national press card issued in Europe. It took about three minutes before a security officer asked journalists to leave the stadium's field. However, reporters freely roamed throughout the stadium and walked the aisles to see the ongoing stage construction.

Officials from the U.S. Consulate in Johannesburg also toured the venue Monday, but declined to speak to journalists.

Meanwhile, a private security firm called Sidas Security was still hiring guards for Tuesday's event on Monday, using a compact car as an office. Sidas manager George Mathabe said the company will have 1,500 guards on duty Tuesday. □



People lay flowers near a statue depicting former president Nelson Mandela, by artist Marco Cianfanelli, near Howick, South Africa, Monday Dec. 9, 2013. This is the place where Mandela was arrested in 1962 and subsequently jailed for 27 years. Mandela died on Dec. 5 aged 95.

(AP Photo/John Robinson)

100,000 mourners.

As a prelude to the stadium event, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and retired Archbishop Desmond Tutu spoke at an event at the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory Monday night.

"What a fantastic gift God gave to us in this Mandela, who quickly became an icon, a global icon of forgiveness, of generosity of spirit," Tutu said.

memorial.

Police promised "thousands" of officers would secure the stadium, though security appeared lax Monday and a security company owner used his small car as a mobile office to hire guards just at the stadium.

Nearly 100 heads of state are expected at the 95,000-capacity FNB Stadium, where some mourners are already camped out

man for the South African Police Service, said Monday.

"We will be on hand to make sure people are able to grieve in a safe environment," Makgale told The Associated Press.

Makgale said a joint task-force of police, diplomats and intelligence service personnel already have been making plans and talking to the foreign delegations who plan to at-

LATIN BRIEFS

Former Curacao prime minister's home searched

WILLEMSTAD, Curacao (AP) —

Authorities in Curacao carried out searches Monday at six properties, including the home of a former prime minister, as part of an ongoing criminal investigation on the Dutch Caribbean island, officials said. The searches at the home of Gerrit Schotte, now a member of parliament and leader of the Movement for Future of Curacao party, are part of an investigation into money laundering, forgery and related fraud, the public prosecutor's office said in a statement. No arrests were made. The statement said two homes, an office and a party headquarters were searched in the presence of a prosecutor. A spokesman for the office, Norman Serphos, said a home owned by Schotte was among the properties searched. He said the investigation had no connection to the slaying in May of Herman Wiels, a prominent local politician, despite local media reports to the contrary. □

Mayor ordered out in Colombia's capital Bogota

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) —

Colombia's inspector-general has ordered Bogota's left-leaning mayor removed from office over alleged mismanagement of a garbage-collection crisis. It was not immediately clear if Mayor Gustavo Petro can remain in office while he appeals the ruling by Alejandro Ordóñez.

Ordóñez is a conservative political ally of former President Alvaro Uribe. His decision would disqualify Petro from holding political office for 15 years. Ordóñez removed prominent leftist politician Piedad Córdoba from the Senate in 2010 and barred her from holding political office for 18 years for allegedly promoting leftist rebels. Petro tried unsuccessfully in December 2012 to fire garbage-collection contractors and replace them with a city-run service. A figure with national appeal, Petro finished third in 2010 presidential elections. He backed Ordóñez's inspector-general candidacy while in the Senate. □

US vet held in N. Korea says his statement was coerced

LISA LEFF

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The 85-year-old U.S. veteran who was detained for weeks by North Korea said Monday that the videotaped confession in which he apologized for killing North Koreans during the war was given involuntarily and under duress.

In a written statement issued Monday, Merrill Newman said he tried to show that the words he read on the recording were not his own by emphasizing the apology's awkward phrasing and poor English grammar.

"Anyone who has read the text of it or who has seen the video of me reading it knows that the words were not mine and were not delivered voluntarily," Newman said. "Anyone who knows me knows that I could not have done the things they had me 'confess' to."

The former Army lieutenant said that while the North Koreans treated him well during his detention at a Pyongyang hotel, an interrogator told him repeatedly that if he did not apologize for his alleged crimes during the Korean War and during his visit to the communist nation, he would be sentenced to 15 years in jail for espionage.

"Under these circumstances, I read the document with the language they insisted on because it seemed to be the only way I might get home," he said.

Newman, who was deported Friday and returned home to California on Saturday, was detained in late October at the end of a 10-day trip to North Korea. His visit that came six decades after he oversaw a group of South Korean wartime guerrillas during the 1950-53 war. He was scheduled to visit South Korea following his North Korea trip to meet some of the former fighters he had helped train. □

Storm snarls travel; power outages persist

Continued from Front

"Am I supposed to sit at the hotel and wait for them to call? And pay for the hotel?" Brenda Mull said. "They wouldn't have gone through bankruptcy if they ran it like a business." The couple was scheduled on another flight Monday night. Half of the high school band from Norman, Okla. landed at Dallas-Fort Worth on Monday after playing in a Pearl Harbor Day parade in Hawaii. But the flight for the other half of the band was canceled because of the ice, leaving them stranded for

an extra day in Hawaii. "Tough break for them, huh?" joked parent chaperone Tami Meyer.

The storm dumped snow through the Mid-Atlantic region. Freezing rain prompted the federal government to allow workers to arrive up to two hours later than normal Monday or take unscheduled leave.

In Washington, cab driver Mahdi Abdi said he had been driving since around midnight and the main roads were clear. But side streets were a different story.

"The small streets, a lot of them are icy," said Abdi,

52. "I don't even go in."

Power outages were reported in Virginia, parts of West Virginia, Maryland and the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area following freezing rain, wet snow and sleet. More than 15,000 customers in Maryland were without power, where the weight of the ice weakened tree limbs that then contacted power lines and other equipment. Some 109,000 customers were without power in Virginia.

Parts of northwest and southwest Virginia and southern West Virginia got snow, while sleet and freezing rain prevailed

west and north of Richmond.

The area is in for more wintry weather. The National Weather Service predicted a second storm for the Mid-Atlantic region, with five inches of snow possible Monday night.

At Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, more than 100 flights were canceled, according to FlightStats.com, and crowds were sparse Monday morning as travelers made alternate plans. Some, though, were settling in for a long wait.

Emilio Lobato, 53, his wife Cheri and their daughters Katherine, 12, and Victoria, 10, were forced to spend an extra night in Washington following a long weekend sightseeing trip. Their flight home Sunday to Jacksonville, Fla., was canceled, and on Monday, the best they could do was a late-afternoon flight to Tampa, across the state.

"My daughter said it would be great to see some snow," Lobato said. "You know what they say: Be careful what you wish for."

"These kids are good travelers," he said. "It's part of the hazards of being a tourist," Lobato said. "They've got homework and books, and maybe they'll break out in some Christmas carols." □



Juan Carlos, right, tries to dig out snow around the truck along Lancaster Pike in Wilmington, Del., when they spun out of control as the first snow of the season moves into the area, Monday, Dec. 9, 2013. (AP Photo/Suchat Pederson)

Government sells remaining stake in GM

DETROIT (AP) — The U.S. government ended up losing \$10.5 billion on its bailout of General Motors, but still says the alternative would have been much worse.

Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew announced Tuesday that the government sold its remaining shares in the Detroit automaker.

The government received 912 million GM shares, or a 60.8 percent stake, in exchange for a \$49.5 billion bailout during the financial crisis in 2008 and 2009. It recovered

\$39 billion of the money, meaning taxpayers came up more than \$10 billion short. But Lew says the rescue was necessary to save 1 million jobs and stop the American auto industry from collapsing.

GM shares rose 1.2 percent in after-hours trading following the announcement. They rose 1.8 percent in regular trading, at one point reaching \$41.17, the highest level since GM returned to the markets with a November 2010 initial public offering. Earlier on Monday, Mark

Reuss, GM's North American president, told reporters in Warren, Michigan, that a government exit would boost sales, especially among pickup truck buyers.

GM has said repeatedly that some potential customers have stayed away from its brands because they object to the government intervening in a private company's finances. Because of the bailout, the company has been given the derisive nickname "Government Motors."

GM went through bankruptcy protection in 2009 and was cleansed of most of its huge debt, while stockholders lost their investments. Since leaving bankruptcy, GM has been profitable for 15 straight quarters, racking up almost \$20 billion in net income on strong new products and rising sales in North America and China. It also has invested \$8.8 billion in U.S. facilities and has added about 3,000 workers, bringing U.S. employment to 80,000. □

Ex-San Diego mayor Filner sentenced for harassment

ELLIOT SPAGAT

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Ex-San

Diego mayor Bob Filner was sentenced Monday to three months of home confinement and three years of probation for harassing women while he led America's eighth-largest city, completing the fall of the former 10-term congressman.

Filner, who resigned amid widespread allegations of sexual harassment, pleaded guilty in October to one felony and two misdemeanors for placing a woman in a headlock, kissing another woman and grabbing the buttocks of a third.

Superior Court Judge Robert Trentacosta's sentence was the same as what pros-

ecutors recommended in a plea agreement with Filner. The 71-year-old former mayor faced a maximum penalty of three years in prison for the felony and one year in jail for each misdemeanor.

The judge specified the Filner may not seek or hold elective office during the term of his probation and will be monitored by GPS during his home confinement, which begins on Jan. 1 and ends March 31. Exceptions to home confinement include medical, mental health and therapy appointments as well as travel to religious services.

Filner spoke briefly during the sentencing hearing.

"I want to apologize to my family who have stood by me through this ordeal, to



Former San Diego Mayor Bob Filner, right, sits with Earl Pott, a member of his defense team, in Robert J. Trentacosta's Superior Courtroom on Monday, Dec. 9, 2013 in San Diego. Filner was sentenced Monday to three months of home confinement and three years of probation for harassing women while he was mayor of San Diego.

(AP Photo/John Gastaldo)

my loyal staff and supporters, the citizens of San Diego and most sincerely to the women I have hurt and offended," Filner said.

He promised to earn back their trust and recover his integrity.

"Certainly the behaviors before this court today will never be repeated," he said.

Melissa Mandel, supervising state deputy attorney general, said victims in the criminal complaint did not want to address the court. She said Filner had demeaned, humiliated and embarrassed them.

"Today is the day that Bob Filner begins to pay his debt to the citizens of San Diego," she said.

Filner sold himself to voters as a champion of civil rights, she said, but his behavior revealed a "very different person."

Filner, who is divorced, was convicted of felony false imprisonment for restraining a woman against her will at a fund-raiser on March 6 and applying additional force when she resisted.

His attorney, Jerry Coughlan, has said it was a headlock.

The misdemeanor counts of battery were for kissing a woman on the lips without permission at a "Meet the Mayor" event on April

6 and grabbing another woman's buttocks at a May 25 rally to clean up an island in San Diego's bay. None of the victims have been identified.

Nearly 20 women have publicly identified themselves as targets of Filner's unwanted advances, including kissing, groping and requests for dates.

His accusers include a retired Navy rear admiral, a San Diego State University dean and a great-grandmother who volunteers answering senior citizens' questions at City Hall.

The charges do not involve Filner's former communications director, Irene McCormack Jackson, who expedited the mayor's downfall by becoming the first to go public with sexual harassment allegations in July.

She has filed a lawsuit against Filner and the city, claiming her boss asked her to work without panties, demanded kisses, told her he wanted to see her naked and dragged her in a headlock while whispering in her ear.

Gloria Allred, McCormack Jackson's attorney, said outside court that Filner was "one lucky man" for being spared jail time.

"Mr. Filner, count your blessings. Your freedom is a gift which you do not deserve," she said. □

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Newtown asks for privacy on shooting anniversary

PAT EATON-ROBB
STEPHEN SINGER
Associated Press
NEWTOWN, Connecticut
(AP) — The Connecticut town of Newtown asked

control. President Barack Obama failed to push through federal legislation to tighten gun laws, including expanded background checks for gun

and six educators shot to death in the school on Dec. 14, 2012. She was reading from a statement released by the families of all 26 victims. The town has

have discouraged the news media from coming to Newtown. "We are trying to respect the world's interest in us, but we also have a real need in our community to gain a foothold," First Selectman Pat Llodra said.

The families also announced they have set up a new website — <http://mysandyhookfamily.org> — where each family can share information on how they are honoring victims. "In the midst of our grief we have come to realize that we want our loved ones to be remembered for the lives they lived and how they touched our hearts," said Krista Rekos, mother of 6-year old Jessica. "We've been uplifted by the support of so many people, and we would like to keep that spirit of unity and love alive in all we do to remember those we so dearly miss." Several memorial services

are planned for the weekend in Newtown. At Saint Rose of Lima, the Roman Catholic church that hosted the funerals of eight children, the service will include the dedication of a memorial arch and the ringing of peace bells that also were rung at Virginia Tech after the mass shooting at the university in 2007 and in New York after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The Rev. Robert Weiss said he planning to keep the church open 24 hours on the anniversary of the shooting, to give people a place to go and pray.

"I know that many people in the town are choosing just to be away," said Weiss, "Not just the most impacted families, but several other families are just going to leave the area for the weekend. They don't want their children subjected to reliving that day." □



Family members representing fourteen of the twenty-six victims from the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting address the media, Monday, Dec. 9, 2013, in Newtown, Conn. Newtown is not hosting formal events to mark the anniversary Saturday. (AP Photo/Jessica Hill)

for privacy during the upcoming anniversary of the school shooting that killed 20 children and six staffers. The officials also joined victims' families Monday in calling for people to mark the date of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting by performing acts of kindness or volunteering with charities.

The gunman, Adam Lanza, killed his mother inside their Newtown home before driving to the school where he carried out his rampage. He killed himself as police arrived.

One of the worst mass shootings in U.S. history, the Newtown attack stoked debate — and fueled divisions — over gun

purchases and a ban on military-style assault rifles. Some states, including Connecticut, passed their own tougher laws after the massacre.

Relatives of more than half the 26 victims said at a news conference that they planned to light a candle on Friday night in honor of their lost loved ones. They also urged people thinking of the victims to find ways to give back to their own communities.

"In this way, we hope that some small measure of good may be returned to the world," said JoAnn Bacon, whose 6-year-old daughter, Charlotte, was among the 20 students

no formal events planned for Saturday, and officials



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New American Airlines emerges as deal closes

DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) —

American Airlines emerged from bankruptcy protection and US Airways culminated its long pursuit of a merger partner as the two completed their deal Monday to create the world's biggest airline.

It's the latest in a series of mergers that will leave four airlines controlling more than 80 percent of the U.S. air-travel market. With less competition, the airlines have successfully limited the number of seats, boosting prices and returning to profitability.

American's old parent, AMR Corp., is gone, replaced by the new American Airlines Group Inc. CEO Doug Parker remotely rang the opening bell of the Nasdaq Stock Market, flanked on stage by executives and labor leaders of both airlines and in front of a crowd of cheering employees.

"Our goal here is to go and restore American Airlines to its position as the greatest airline in the world," Parker said. The largest airline as recently as 2008, American struggled through a decade of huge losses and fell behind United and Delta in size.

For passengers, the merger won't mean many immediate changes. Whether the deal leads to higher ticket prices, the issue at the heart of legal challenges

from the government and consumer groups, remains to be seen.

Parker said that merger won't lead to higher airfares because the new American plans to keep all the service currently offered by American and US Airways.

"Airline prices are like prices in other businesses — they track with supply and demand, and we're not reducing any of the supply," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. Elite members of the two frequent-flier programs will get reciprocal benefits in early January, with other changes being phased in, executives said. The airlines expect to soon be able to book passengers on each other's flights, increasing the destinations available to customers of both.

It will take about two years to combine American's fleet and workforce with those of US Airways, Parker said. US Airways will join Continental, Northwest and other airlines that now exist only in the memories of employees and long-time travelers.

Airline mergers are notoriously troublesome. United has been plagued by computer-network problems since combining with Continental, leading to outages and flight delays. Airlines' technology systems handle everything from passenger information to weight and bal-

ance calculations on every flight. Then there is the difficulty in merging two sets of employees who, in this case, are represented

eight-year battle between pilots for US Airways and America West. The union that represents mechanics at US Airways boycotted



U.S. Airways CEO Doug Parker smiles as he gives a broadcast interview at AMR headquarters, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2013, in Fort Worth, Texas. American Airlines and US Airways seem an unlikely couple, even to the man who will lead the combined company after their merger on Monday.

(AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez)

by different unions. Already the two flight-attendant unions are fighting with each other — reminiscent of the continuing,

Monday's event because their contract talks have been stalled for nearly three years.

Unions at American re-

ceived Parker like a conquering hero. Their support for a merger led by US Airways executives was a turning point when AMR CEO Tom Horton still hoped to keep his airline independent. For their efforts, the unions won stock in the new company.

Longtime American CEO Robert Crandall flew in from Florida for the occasion and predicted that Parker would "recreate a great airline." Crandall said American fell from grace by waiting too long to file for bankruptcy and because his successor angered workers in 2003 with a secret deal on executive bonuses while regular workers were taking pay and benefit cuts.

On Monday, Parker made symbolic moves to extend a hand to labor — painting over parking spaces once reserved for executives, and asking Nasdaq to inscribe a commemorative opening bell to the employees instead of to him. Still, the honeymoon could be a short one. "His greatest challenge is keeping positive sentiment on his side," said Vicki Bryan, an analyst with bond-research firm Gimme Credit. "He's at the peak of 'happy' right now. He's got to keep the unions happy; he's got to keep the computers running; he's got to keep the balloon in the air." □

US household wealth reaches record high \$77.3T

CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Americans' wealth reached an all-time this summer, buoyed by record-setting stock prices and a healthy recovery in home values.

The Federal Reserve says to U.S. net worth, a measure of household wealth, rose 2.6 percent to \$77.3 tril-

lion in the July-September quarter. Net worth reflects the value of homes, stocks, bank accounts and other assets minus mortgages, credit cards and other debts.

Rising stock prices boosted Americans' net worth \$917 billion. Higher home values added another \$428 billion.

Greater net worth can

create a "wealth effect," which boosts economic growth by encouraging more households to spend. But the gains haven't been equally distributed. The wealthiest 10 percent of households own about 80 percent of stocks. And home ownership has declined since the recession, particularly among lower-income Americans. □



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US Financial Front:**Rising riches: 1 in 5 in America reaches affluence****HOPE YEN****Associated Press****WASHINGTON (AP)** —

About 20 percent of U.S. adults become rich for parts of their lives, wielding outsize influence on America's economy and politics as its fastest-growing income group, based on take-home pay.

The growing numbers of poor Americans have been well documented, but survey data provided to The Associated Press detail the flip side of a record income gap — the rise of the "new rich," who tend to enjoy better schools, employment and gated communities, making it easier to pass on their privilege to their children.

The success of this little-known group has implications for politics and policy: they may pose the biggest barrier to reducing U.S. income inequality, based on their tendency to believe that Americans can get ahead on their own, without more government support, experts say.

The group is more liberal than lower-income groups on issues such as abortion and gay marriage, according to an analysis of General Social Survey data by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. But when it comes to money, their views aren't so open. They're wary of any government role in closing the income gap.

Made up largely of older professionals, working married couples and more educated singles, the new rich are those with household income of \$250,000 or more at some point during their working lives. That puts them, if sometimes temporarily, in the top 2 percent of earners.

Even outside periods of unusual wealth, members of this group generally hover in the \$100,000-plus income range, keeping them in the top 20 percent of earners. Companies increasingly are marketing to this rising demographic, fueling a surge of "mass luxury" products and services from premium Starbucks coffee

and organic groceries to concierge medicine and VIP lanes at airports. Political parties are taking a renewed look at the up-for-grabs group, once solidly Republican.

They're not the traditional rich. In a country where poverty is at a record high, today's new rich are notable for their sense of economic fragility. They've reached the top 2 percent, only to fall back below it, in many cases. That makes them much more fiscally conservative than other Americans, polling suggests, and less likely to support public programs, such as food stamps or early public education, to help the disadvantaged.

Last week, President Barack Obama asserted that growing inequality is "the defining challenge of our time," signaling that it will be a major theme for Democrats in next year's elections.

New research suggests that affluent Americans are more numerous than government data depict, encompassing 21 percent of working-age adults for at least a year by the time they turn 60. That proportion has more than doubled since 1979.

At the same time, an increasing polarization of low-wage work and high-skill jobs has left middle-income careers depleted. Some 54 percent of working-age Americans will experience near-poverty for portions of their lives, hurt by globalization and the loss of good-paying manufacturing jobs.

In Gallup polling in October, 60 percent of people making \$90,000 or more said average Americans already had "plenty of opportunity" to get ahead; among those making less than \$48,000, the share was 48 percent.

"For many in this group, the American dream is not dead. They have reached affluence for parts of their lives and see it as very attainable, even if the dream has become more elusive for everyone else,"

says Mark Rank, a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, who calculated numbers on the affluent for a forthcoming book,

fluent," the new rich make up roughly 25 million U.S. households and account for nearly 40 percent of total U.S. consumer spend-

households took home a record 51 percent of the nation's income. The median income of this group is more than \$150,000.



This November 2013 photo shows James Lott outside the Wal-Mart store where he works as a pharmacist in Bonney Lake, Wash. Lott, who lives in Renton, Wash., a suburb of Seattle, adds significantly to his six-figure job salary by day-trading stocks.

(AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

"Chasing the American Dream," to be published by the Oxford University Press.

Sometimes referred to by marketers as the "mass af-

ing. While paychecks shrank for most Americans after the 2007-2009 recession, theirs held steady or edged higher. In 2012, the top 20 percent of U.S.

Once concentrated in the old-money enclaves of the Northeast, the new rich are now spread across the U.S., mostly in bigger cities and their suburbs. □

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Riot police storm opposition offices in Ukraine

JIM HEINTZ
YURAS KARMAU
Associated Press writers

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)— Heavily armed riot troops broke into the offices of a top Ukrainian opposition party office in Kiev and seized its servers Monday, the party said, as anti-government protests crippled the capital for yet another day. Elsewhere police dismantled or blocked off several small protest tent camps that near key national government buildings in the city.

Tensions also rose as a double cordon of helmeted, shield-holding police deployed in the street near Kiev's city administration building, which demonstrators had occupied and turned into a makeshift command post and dormitory.

The moves came a day after hundreds of thousands of demonstrators crammed into Kiev, the biggest in three weeks of protests that started when Ukraine's president backed away from signing a long-awaited pact to deepen ties with the 28-nation European Union.

Protesters are angered not only by the thwarting of their desire to become closer to the West and spin out of Russia's orbit, but by police violence against the demonstrators. Club-swinging police have twice broken up protest rallies. Ostap Semerak, a member of the Fatherland Party, told The Associated Press that troops broke into the party's offices on Monday evening, some climbing in through its windows.

"They are storming us. The images are insane," he said by telephone. The troops left after con-

fiscating some computer equipment, he said. An Associated Press reporter later saw broken glass and smashed computers in the offices.

Party member Marina Sorko also said the troops surrounded and blockaded several opposition-minded Ukrainian media outlets, making their and other media websites inac-

has paralyzed the country. The European Union's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, was also heading to Ukraine to help defuse the tensions.

Ukraine's political stand-off has been aggravated by its rapidly deteriorating finances. The economy has been in recession for more than a year, and the government is in desper-

the way forward. Opinion polls, however, show that the EU is more popular among Ukrainians than Russia.

Wearing helmets and holding shields, Ukrainian police surrounded three tent encampments outside the government and presidential offices in central Kiev on Monday night. Riot police also began remov-



A man wearing Ukrainian national flag walks past Ukrainian riot police as they block the road next to Pro-European Union activists gathered on the Independence Square in Kiev, Ukraine, Monday, Dec. 9, 2013. The policemen, wearing helmets and holding shields, formed a chain across Kiev's main street outside the city building. Organizers called on protesters to vacate the city hall and the other building which the opposition had used as its headquarters.

(AP Photo/Sergei Grits)

cessible. The party is headed by imprisoned former prime Yulia Tymoshenko, a long-standing foe of President Viktor Yanukovych, and is the largest opposition grouping in the parliament. Critics say Tymoshenko's conviction on abuse of office charges was a case of political revenge.

In a surprise move, Yanukovych announced he would sit down with three former Ukrainian presidents on Tuesday to discuss a way out of the crisis that

ate need of foreign funding to avoid a default. As talks stalled with the International Monetary Fund, Yanukovych has sought a bailout loan from Russia. This former Soviet republic of 46 million people is sharply divided over the prospects of drawing closer to its powerful neighbor, Russia. Yanukovych's stronghold, is dominated by Russian speakers who want closer ties to Russia, in contrast to Kiev's students and residents in the west who see better EU ties as

ing barricades on the approach to the government building. Most protesters remained standing.

World boxing champion and opposition leader Vitali Klitschko warned the authorities against any further escalation in tensions. "We are calling upon law enforcement to restrain from using force against peaceful demonstrators," he said as he tried to stop police from removing the tents.

A large protest tent camp remained in place on In-

dependence Square, the downtown plaza that is the epicenter of the protests. The square is a few hundred meters from the protester-occupied city administration building, which a court has ordered demonstrators to vacate by Monday. The appearance of riot police nearby raised anxieties inside, and some of the hundreds of people inside left.

But hundreds remained inside, armed with wood planks, metal rods and bottles of sunflower oil, hoping to make riot police slip if they advanced.

"We won't let anybody into the building," said Vasyl Khlopotaruk, one of the activists. "But we hope there isn't bloodshed."

Some activists approached police lines, urging officers to come over to their side and even offering them food. As tensions mounted, Yanukovych announced on his website that he would meet with Ukraine's three former presidents to discuss the situation. But at the same time, prosecutors called in several opposition leaders for questioning.

EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso dispatched EU foreign policy chief Ashton to Kiev on Tuesday, saying she will try to help defuse "the very tense situation that Ukraine is living today." Barroso praised the demonstrators, saying they are "writing the new narrative for Europe." U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt cautioned the government against using force. "Peaceful demonstrations must be allowed to continue," he wrote on Twitter. "Dialogue and non-violence key, world watching. Opportunity must not be lost." □

Hagel meets with Pakistan's civilian and military leaders

**THOM SHANKER
SALMAN MASOOD**

© 2013 New York Times

ISLAMABAD - Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel met with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the country's top military officer Monday, hoping to improve one of Washington's most complicated relationships - one marked by agreement on the dangers of terrorism but also by deep differences over how to counter the threat.

Sharif brought up the subject of U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal belt, a highly contentious issue that Sharif's electoral rivals, particularly the former cricketer Imran Khan, have used against him. Khan has led several protests against the drone strikes and in recent weeks his supporters have partially blocked NATO supply lines that pass through Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the northwestern prov-

ince that is controlled by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party.

Hagel also met Monday with the new military chief, Lt. Gen. Raheel Sharif, at army headquarters in Rawalpindi, the garrison city near Islamabad. The Pakistani military later issued a terse statement noting that the defense relationship, bilateral ties and regional stability were discussed.

Hagel's visit, the first by a U.S. defense secretary in almost four years, came at a time of change for Pakistan's powerful military, with Raheel Sharif, who is not related to the prime minister, having assumed his post just last month. The general had not been viewed as the military leadership's preferred candidate and his selection was seen as an assertion of independence by the prime minister.



U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, left, stands with Pakistani Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Raheel Sharif after a meeting on Monday, Dec. 9, 2013 in Rawalpindi Pakistan. Secretary Hagel made a brief stop in Pakistan to meet with military officials and the Prime Minister.

The brief trip was conducted under tight security conditions.

Before the meetings, a senior Pentagon official acknowledged that while the United States and Pakistan have a "significant over-

lap" of regional security interests, "it has not been 100 percent."

Washington has accused Pakistani intelligence officials of attempting to assert influence in Afghanistan through covert support for

terrorist groups that have killed Americans and Afghans. The Pakistani government, meanwhile, has expressed outrage over U.S. drone strikes against militant targets inside Pakistan, some of which have killed civilians.

"There is some friction in the relationship," the Pentagon official said. "One of the reasons the secretary is going to Pakistan is to address those issues head-on." The United States recently restored funding to underwrite Pakistani counterterrorism efforts, including operations against militants in the regions along the Afghan border. Washington had frozen the military aid in 2011 when the countries' relations reached a low point after the Navy SEAL raid that killed Osama bin Laden and an errant U.S. airstrike that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers at a border post. □



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Egypt: Brotherhood's Badie denies inciting violence

SARAH EL DEEB

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood denied his group was to blame for violence as he appeared in court Monday for the first time since being detained following the ouster of the Islamist president last summer. The trial against Mohammed Badie and other senior Islamists comes as authorities tighten a crackdown on dissent, arresting dozens of protesters in a raid on Al-Azhar University, Sunni Islam's most prominent educational institution.

In a sign of increasing intolerance for demonstrations and the widening of a crackdown, prosecutors have also sent two dozen



This photo released by Egypt's Interior Ministry shows Mohammed Badie, the supreme leader of the Muslim Brotherhood after being detained by Egyptian security in Cairo, Egypt. Badie appeared in court Monday, Dec. 9, 2013 for the first time since his arrest in August. He and 14 other leaders of the group are facing charges of inciting violence and murder during protests. The trial was postponed to Feb. 11, 2013.

(AP Photo/Egyptian Interior Ministry)

secular activists, including one of Egypt's most prominent bloggers, to trial on charges of violating a new law that restricts protests. The military-backed government argues the crackdown on protests is necessary to restore stability, particularly ahead of a referendum expected next month over amendments to an Islamist-drafted constitution.

The vote is considered a milestone in the political transition plan adopted following the popularly backed July coup that ousted Islamist President Mohammed Morsi. The military-backed government has promised the charter would set Egypt on the path to democracy and is to be followed by parliamentary and presidential elections.

Meanwhile, authorities have cracked down on Morsi supporters, widening a net of arrests and legal prosecution to include senior leaders as well as students and protesters.

The authorities are seeking through the prosecutions to show that the Brotherhood fueled violence during Morsi's one-year presidency and after the coup — and to give legal justification for imprisoning its leaders.

Amid tight security Monday, Badie and 14 other senior leaders of the group appeared in the defendants' cage for the opening of a trial focusing on July protests in which at least five people were killed, including a former army officer.

Addressing the courtroom, Badie denied the Brotherhood was behind any violence.

"Me and my group are not offenders or defendants. □

Uruguay set to approve pot dealing

LEONARDO HABERKORN

Associated Press

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (AP) — Uruguay is pushing ahead to create a legal marijuana market despite warnings from educators, psychiatrists and pharmacists of dangerous side effects.

The Senate planned to debate the pot plan Tuesday, with approval by the ruling coalition widely expected before the night is over. Because senators turned away all requests for amendments after it passed the lower chamber, their vote will be final. President Jose Mujica says the point is not to promote marijuana use, but to push out organized crime. The government hopes that when licensed growers, providers and users can openly trade in the drug, illegal traffickers will be denied their profits and go away.

"This is a plague, just like cigarettes are a plague," Mujica told reporters several days earlier.

The Senate Health Commission was given ample arguments to back away from the plan, which would make Uruguay the world's only country where the government is at the center of a legal marijuana market.

Psychiatrists predicted a rise in mental illness. Pharmacists said selling pot alongside prescription drugs would harm their professional image.

Marijuana's negative impact on learning is well known, and "is related to educational failure, behavioral problems and depressive symptoms. □

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Europe tries to close deal on bad banks

DAVID McHUGH

JOHN DAHLBURG

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European finance ministers are taking another crack at an issue that's bedeviled them: how to handle failing banks at an EU level.

At a meeting in Brussels, German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble said Monday that he's "optimistic" a deal on creating a new European Union agency to deal with bad banks can be reached this month.

"There is a lot of work to do," he said. "I don't know if we will do it in one meeting or if we will need an additional meeting."

EU leaders are under pressure to arrive at a compromise on the banking agency by the end of the year so it can be enacted by the current European Parliament. The issue is expected to dominate Tuesday's meeting of finance ministers from all 28 EU member countries. On Monday, ministers from the 17 nations using the euro currency met.

One sticking point preventing agreement has been Germany's opposition to letting the EU's executive arm be the decision maker on whether to close or restructure a bank. Schaeuble didn't say Monday if Germany is ready to drop its opposition, but said "there are solutions" to the issue.

Another point of contention has been who should pay if a troubled bank needs taxpayer funds so that its failure does not hurt the overall economy. First in line to take losses should be bank shareholders, and a troubled bank could also be sold to new owners. □

Defendant in UK soldier killing: I love al-Qaida

SYLVIA HUI

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A man accused of killing an off-duty British soldier in a frenzied knife attack on a London street defended his actions in court Monday, claiming he is a soldier fighting for the Muslim religion and declaring his love for al-Qaida.

Michael Adebolajo, 28, said that he attacked soldier Lee Rigby because he wanted to protest Britain's invasion of Muslim lands. He claimed to be one of many fighters engaged in jihad, or holy war, against Western countries that wage war in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

When asked what his defense was, Adebolajo answered that he was a "soldier of Allah" and said he had no regrets for his actions.

"I will never regret obeying the command of Allah," he said. "I'm a soldier. I can't do anything else."

Adebolajo spoke calmly and clearly as he was cross-examined at London's Central Criminal Court on Monday, telling jurors that while he had never met anyone from al-Qaida, he was full of admiration for the terrorist group.

"I love them. I consider them brothers in Islam," he said of the group responsible for the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

Adebolajo and fellow defendant Michael Adebowale, 22, are accused of murder in connection with Rigby's death, a brutal slaying that shocked the country. Rigby, 25, was walking near his barracks in south London in May when he was run over by a car, then stabbed and nearly decapitated.

The two suspects deny the murder charge, and Monday's hearing was the

jury's first chance to hear directly from one of the defendants about what led to the attack.

Adebolajo laid out his life story, saying his parents were Christian and he used to read from the Bible, but

said he had tried to travel to Somalia so that he could live under Sharia law, but was detained by Kenyan troops before he could get there. He also said that he had taken part in anti-war demonstrations, but felt



This is a Court artist sketch by Elizabeth Cook of Michael Adebolajo, centre, who is one of the men accused of killing British soldier Lee Rigby in May, as he gave evidence at the Central Criminal Court "The Old Bailey" in London Monday Dec. 9, 2013. Adebolajo told the court that he loved al-Qaida and considers the group's members his brothers. "I love them. I consider them brothers in Islam," said Adebolajo, 28, speaking calmly as he was cross-examined at the court on Monday.

(AP Photo/Elizabeth Cook/PA)

he became frustrated and converted to Islam during his time at university. He

that they were not effective.

The suspect was at times

combative toward the prosecutor, but remained unemotional until he spoke about his family.

"I love my wife. I love all my children very much. It's very difficult to leave them. But every soldier has to go through this," he said.

Turning to the attack, he said that he was not motivated by any personal grievances against Rigby — rather the plan was just to find a British soldier. He said that he made sure that Rigby was a soldier before he killed him, and hoped the death could "indirectly save the lives of many."

"I was keen that the reason for the death of this man is not misunderstood. I wanted people to understand. ... It only happened for one reason only, and that is foreign policy," he said.

Adebolajo said he stayed at the scene waiting for police to arrive, then rushed at them because his religion forbade him to run away from the enemy. He denied a charge of trying to kill a police officer. □

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Argentine police strikes inspire mobs; four dead

MICHAEL WARREN
Associated Press

Buenos Aires, Argentina

(AP) — Outbreaks of looting have spread across Argentina as mobs take advantage of strikes by police demanding pay raises to match inflation. The central government has dispatched federal police to trouble spots and appealed for an end to what some officials are calling treason.

By Monday, the death toll from the chaotic outbursts climbed to four as officers rallied at their stations. Many businesses were closed in fear just ahead of the December holidays, when Argentina's simmering social conflicts have a history of exploding in the summer heat.

President Cristina Fernandez's Cabinet chief Jorge Capitanich described the crimes as premeditated acts by groups that want to generate chaos and anxiety on the eve of Tues-

day's 30th anniversary of Argentina's return to de-

Capitanich told reporters. He said the national

Aires mayor, and that any salary dispute must be



Buenos Aires Province police officers demonstrate outside a police station asking for a wage increase, in La Plata, Argentina, Monday, Dec. 9, 2013. Outbreaks of looting have spread across Argentina as mobs take advantage of strikes by police demanding pay raises to match inflation. The central government has dispatched federal police to trouble spots and appealed for an end to what some officials are calling treason. (AP Photo/DyN, Jose Ferreyra)

mocracy.

"In some ways, this amounts to the crime of treason,"

government is in continual contact with Argentina's 23 governors and the Bue-

resolved through negotiation, not extortion. The government has sent

federal police, border patrol officers and other forces to hot spots where people are arming themselves in fear of mobs.

Looting first broke out Cordoba province last week, damaging hundreds of businesses and leaving two dead and more than a 100 people injured before the governor and police reached a deal that effectively doubles police salaries to 12,000 pesos a month. That's about \$1,915 at the official exchange rate. The national government initially blamed the phenomenon on Cordoba's governor, a political rival of Fernandez.

But even close presidential allies have been hit since then as police earning base salaries of less than 6,000 pesos stage copycat strikes across Argentina. A third victim died that first night when his supermarket was set afire as he defended it from a mob in Almirante Brown, in provincial Buenos Aires, where Gov. Daniel Scioli appealed for calm.

Scioli's leadership was tested again Monday after a dozen more stores were looted in Mar del Plata and hundreds of police gathered in a central square, rejecting his offer to raise entry-level salaries to what he called a "fair and reasonable" 8,570 pesos a month. The officers vowed to remain off the job until they get 12,500 as a base salary.

With police in many provinces demanding a doubling of their pay to keep ahead of inflation rising at more than 25 percent a year, other public employees are watching closely. Rio Negro's governor settled his province's 21-hour police strike by raising base salaries to 8,500 pesos, only to see health and sanitation workers walk off the job Monday, demanding their own raises.

The worst violence Sunday night was in Concordia, in Entre Rios province. Twenty people were injured and a young man was electrocuted inside a looted store. Capitanich would not identify him. □

Venezuelan mayoral votes: no big power shift

WILLIAM NEUMAN
© 2013 New York Times

CARACAS, Venezuela

Venezuelans went to the polls Sunday to elect hundreds of mayors around the country in a vote seen as an early test of the fledgling president, Nicolas Maduro, and his ability to carry the country further along the socialist path laid out by his predecessor and mentor, Hugo Chavez.

"It's like a thermometer, to see if the government is doing good or bad," said Jose de Corral, 60, a schoolteacher who backs the government. He had just come from voting, as shown by the purple ink on his pinkie finger, applied at the polling station as part of a system to keep people from voting more than once. In a country deeply divided between government supporters and opponents, de Corral said the election would "show who is stronger."

But the results did not show a major shift in the

country's political alignment. Opposition leaders had hoped to win a majority of the total votes cast in mayoral races nationwide, but the head of the national electoral commission, Tibisay Luceña, announced that with more than 97 percent of votes transmitted, Maduro's United Socialist Party had received 44 percent, compared with 41 percent for the main opposition coalition. Other parties, including some allied with the government, received the remainder.

The government party retained control of the largest municipality in Caracas, the capital, while the opposition held on to what is known as the metropolitan mayoralty there, as well as the mayoralty of Maracaibo, the second largest city in Venezuela. The opposition did gain some ground, winning races in Valencia and Barquisimeto, which had been held by the ruling party.



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, right, greets his supporters next to Libertador Municipality's candidate Jorge Rodriguez in Caracas, Venezuela.

(AP Photo/Fernando Llano)

Nine months after Chavez's death, a struggling economy presented the biggest challenge for the ruling party.

Inflation is 54 percent a year, growth is sputtering and government restrictions on hard currency have throttled back imports. Many basic products, like toilet paper and corn flour, are in short supply, and when they do show up, consumers often have to wait in long lines to buy them.

Maduro had appeared weak after narrowly winning an election to replace Chavez in April, and he stumbled often in his first months in office. But he seemed to gain confidence in recent weeks, in particular with a forceful campaign to make retailers lower the prices they charge for a wide array of goods, including appliances, televisions, car parts and toys. □


LOCAL
Aruba TODAY

General Manager Awards at the Radisson:

Blanca Fajardo, Melissa Kock and Albert de la Cruz Cited as Top Performers at the Radisson



PALM BEACH – Awards for August and September were bestowed at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa over lunch at the Grand Caribbean Ballroom. Blanca Fajardo won top honors for August, Melissa Kock outshone all other candidates for Septem-

ber, and Albert de la Cruz, became the winner of the coveted supervisor of the second quarter title. Blanca Fajardo, was cited as dynamic, and friendly, and praised as an excellent team player. Ronald Wolff, Landscaping, Diana Giel, Housekeeping, were the

runner ups for the coveted Colleague of the Month title for August. Melissa Kock was cited as determined, committed and respectful, and praised for her excellent leadership. Roddymar Statia, Albert Manuela, Theodore Kelly and Emeterio Navas

were the runner ups for the coveted Colleague of the Month title for September. Albert de la Cruz cited as a self starter, a responsible and involved supervisor of the award-winning Larimar spa, snatched the title of Supervisor of the 2nd Quarter from other contenders,

Patricia Alexander, Mirasolo and Milaine Aristomene of Housekeeping, who became the runner ups. Pictured here, those nominated and the winners, true Yes, I Can champions, at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa. □

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Rob Calvanico honored at the Caribbean Palm Village



NOORD - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice gentleman who is a loyal and friendly Visitor of Aruba, as Distinguished Visitor, at the Caribbean Palm Village. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years.

The honoree was Mr. Rob Calvanico from Paterson New Jersey. Rob fell in love with Aruba since the first time he visited the Island, and he also loves the friendly people of Aruba, the Caribbean Palm Village, the climate, beaches, restaurants, and Aruba feels like a second home and the people are like a family to him. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing



the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Mislady Fingal representing the Caribbean Palm Village. □

Cosmo Guarriello & Lisa De Angelis honored at the Marriott Ocean Club



PALM BEACH - Recently Jonathan Boekhoudt with Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to present Cosmo Guarriello & Lisa De Angelis with the "Goodwill Ambassador" certificate to commemorate 20 consecutive years visiting Aruba. They hail from Melville New York and have chosen Aruba as their home away from home for the spectacular people, perfect weather and the wide range of restaurants. The ceremony was held at the Marriot Ocean Club in the presence of Lisette Bouwman, Executive Adm. Assistant at the Ocean Club. □

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Pan-American Life names new director in Dutch Caribbean

WILLEMSTAD - Pan-American Life Insurance Group, a leading provider of insurance and financial services throughout the Americas, announced today that Valery Abel Maria Sinot has been named as their new Managing Director - Dutch Caribbean.

"The Dutch Caribbean is an important part of our regional portfolio," said Pan-American Life's CEO and Managing Director - Caribbean, Miguel Sierra. "With his skills and background, particularly on the employee benefits side of the business, Valery is the ideal person to bring focus and effective leadership to our operations in this jurisdiction."

Originally from The Netherlands, Sinot has been based in Curaçao since 2007, during which time he served as Manager of Marketing and Sales for Fatum, a part of Guardian Holdings Limited. His other professional experi-

ences include serving as Relationship Manager for Institutional Clients at ING Investment Management and as Senior Relationship Manager – Special Relations at Nationale-Nederlanden Corporate Clients. "In many ways 2013 has been about building the foundation for our future success across the Dutch and English speaking Caribbean," Sierra added. "Valery's addition to the Pan-American Life family is a reflection of our commitment to building a team of strong and experienced individuals with high level expertise across all areas of the business, that will drive our growth in 2014 and beyond."

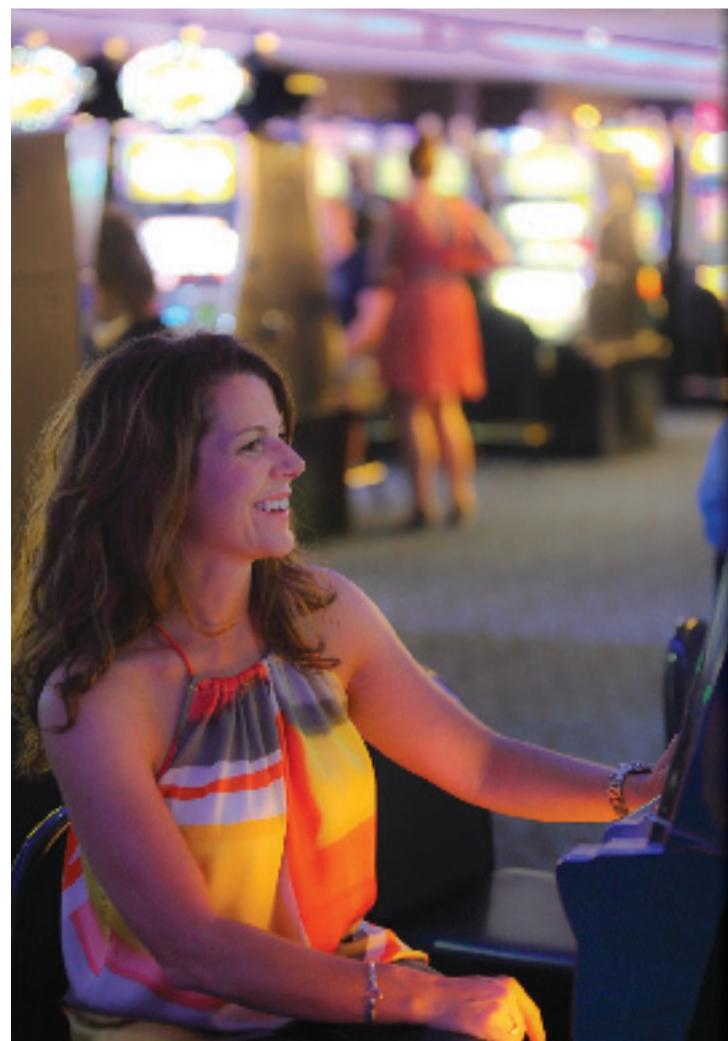
Sinot earned his Bachelor's degree in Engineering from Delft University of Technology in The Netherlands before going on to pursue two Master's degrees, in Building Technology and in Architecture.

About Pan-American Life:

The Pan-American Life Insurance Group is a leading provider of insurance and financial services throughout the Americas. New Orleans-based Pan-American Life Insurance Company, the Group's flagship member, has been delivering trusted financial services since 1911, employing more than 1,300 worldwide, providing top-rated life and health insurance, employee benefits and financial services in 47 states, the District of Columbia (DC), Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Group's member companies offer individual and/or group life and health insurance throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The Group has branches and affiliates in Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, and 15 Caribbean markets, including Barbados, Cayman Islands, Curacao and



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



Torre, La Russa, Cox elected to baseball Hall

By HOWIE RUMBERG
AP Sports Writer

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla.

(AP) -- Joe Torre, Tony La Russa and Bobby Cox spent decades trying to beat each other, no holds barred. On this day, however, they were a mutual admiration society.

And why not? They were going to the Hall of Fame together.

With a combined eight World Series titles and more than 7,500 wins, the managerial trio made it to Cooperstown in results announced Monday. Each was unanimously selected when the 16 voters on the expansion era committee met a day earlier.

"They're not the easiest guys to manage against, that's for sure. But it was fun. It was always a battle," Cox said Monday at the winter meetings. "And I consider them enemies on the field, but friends off the field."

All three exceeded the



Retired managers, from left, Tony La Russa, Joe Torre and Bobby Cox gather for a photo after it was announced that they were unanimously elected to the baseball Hall of Fame, at a news conference during MLB winter meetings in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Monday, Dec. 9, 2013.

magic benchmark of 2,000 wins - only Connie Mack and John McGraw have won more.

"Managing against them, you certainly learned things," said Torre, now an executive vice president for Major League Baseball. "I am honored to go into the Hall with these two guys."

Induction ceremonies will be held July 27 in Cooperstown, N.Y.

Candidates needed 12 votes for election. No one else on the 12-person ballot that included former players' union head Marvin Miller and late New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner got more than six votes.

Torre became the fifth manager to win four World Series championships, leading the Yankees to titles in 1996 and from 1998-00 - beating Cox's Braves twice.

Continued on Page 22



Cleveland Browns safety T.J. Ward (43) and linebacker D'Qwell Jackson (52) tackle New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski (87) after a catch in the third quarter of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 8, 2013, in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press

Patriots put TE Gronkowski on IR with knee injury

By HOWARD ULMAN
AP Sports Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)

-- The New England Patriots placed tight end Rob Gronkowski on injured reserve Monday with a damaged right knee.

Gronkowski was hurt midway through the third quarter of the Patriots' 27-26 win over the Cleveland Browns on Sunday when he was hit on the knee by safety T.J. Ward after a 21-yard reception. Gronkowski missed the first six games this season after forearm and back surgeries and the Patriots went 5-1. In the next six

games, he led all NFL tight ends with 37 catches and 560 yards receiving. They were 4-2 in those games, but the offense was much more productive.

Patriots coach Bill Belichick said Monday that experience without Gronkowski could help. "I'd like to think there's going to be some carry-over there, not only (from) the first six weeks of the season, but the entire training camp as well," he said. "That's the way we practiced and played most of the year, including the preseason games and that's what, 10 games? So,

it was great to have him back and he was, obviously, a big contributor for us." Gronkowski caught touchdown passes in the last four games. On Sunday, he had two catches for 32 yards.

Cleveland Browns safety T.J. Ward (43) and linebacker D'Qwell Jackson (52) tackle New England Pa ...

Gronkowski suffered a torn ACL and damaged MCL, a person familiar with the injury said Monday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the team did not release those details. □

Leo Di Caprio partners with Venturi for FIA team

MONACO (AP) — Catch him if you can: Leonardo DiCaprio is getting into the electric race-car business. The Oscar-nominated actor announced Monday he's partnering with Venturi Automobiles and will enter a team in the FIA Formula E Championship, which is the first series exclusively for electric cars. The DiCaprio-backed entry is the 10th and final entrant for the open-wheel series set to launch next year. "The future of our planet depends on our ability to embrace fuel-efficient, clean-energy vehicles," DiCaprio said in a statement. "Venturi Grand Prix has shown tremendous foresight in their decision to create an environmentally friendly racing team, and I am happy to be a part of this effort." Alejandro Agag, CEO of series promoter Formula E Holdings, welcomed DiCaprio to the series. "Very few environmental leaders have helped more than him to spread the message of sustainability around the world," Agag said. "Having people like him and Richard Branson — global ambassadors for the environment — is a privilege for our championship and will greatly help us to spread the use of electric cars in cities



This Sept. 22, 2013 file photo shows actor Leonardo DiCaprio at the launching ceremony of Qingdao Oriental Movie "Metropolis" in Qingdao in east China's Shandong province.

Associated Press

around the planet."

The Venturi Grand Prix Formula E Team will also have as its co-founders Bert Hedaya, Francesco Costa and Gildo Pallanca Pastor, founder of Venturi Automobiles. Venturi Automobiles is the current holder of the world land speed record for an electric vehicle; a Buckeye Bul-

let 2.5 clocked 307 mph in 2010.

"Venturi has been a pioneer in electric high performance vehicles for more than a decade and Formula E gives us the fantastic opportunity to further improve our advanced technologies through motorsport, as well as compete all over the world," Pastor said.

Formula E is slated to debut next September and run through June 2015 on street courses that run through the heart of major cities. Beijing, London and Los Angeles are expected to be on the schedule for the one-hour races intended for electric cars capable of reaching speeds of more than 135 mph with zero emissions.

Other teams already announced are IndyCar's Andretti Autosport and Dragon Racing, ex-Formula 1 team Super Aguri, Audi-backed Abt and Branson's Virgin. Venturi plans to become a Formula E constructor in season 2, when the team plans to build its own car.

Teams will have two drivers and four series-provided, single-seat cars in the first season. Renault has signed on as the car manufacturer, but series officials expect three to five manufacturers in the second season. Michelin is the tire supplier.

The car batteries will last up to 25 minutes at a time, so drivers will have to switch cars during the race while their batteries recharge. Fox Sports has signed a multi-year deals with the FIA Formula E Championship and the International Motor Sports Association. □

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NBA Capsules

Kobe returns, but Raptors beat Lakers 106-94

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kobe Bryant had nine points and eight rebounds in his season debut for the Lakers, but Amir Johnson scored a career-high 32 points in the trade-depleted Toronto Raptors' 106-94 victory over Los Angeles on Sunday. Bryant began his 18th NBA season by going 2 for 9 with four assists and eight turnovers in 28 minutes. The fourth-leading scorer in NBA history hadn't played since tearing his Achilles tendon in April, undergoing several months of rehabilitation to return for Los Angeles' 20th game of the new season.

But the Lakers never led, and Toronto improbably snapped its five-game losing streak despite playing without forward Rudy Gay, who is expected to be traded to Sacramento on Monday as the centerpiece of an apparent seven-player deal.

Kyle Lowry had 23 points and eight assists, and DeMar DeRozan added 10 of his 26 points in the final 4:35 of the Raptors' first road win over the Lakers in 11 tries since Dec. 28, 2001.

Nick Young scored 19 points for the Lakers, who went 10-9 without Bryant this season, forging a win-



Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant, right, passes the ball around Toronto Raptors' DeMar DeRozan, left, during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2013.

Associated Press

ning record without the five-time NBA champion and with little help from fellow injured MVP Steve Nash.

CELTICS 114, KNICKS 73
NEW YORK (AP) — Jordan

Crawford scored 23 points and Boston had the most-lopsided victory in the NBA this season, battering New York.

Jared Sullinger added 21 points for the Celtics,

who jumped to leads of 12-0, 18-1 and 25-3 and improved their Atlantic Division-leading record to 10-12.

The Celtics led 58-31 at half-time, then Crawford made four 3-pointers in a 34-point quarter that extended Boston's lead to 92-56. The Celtics then scored the first four points of the fourth for a 40-point bulge, triggering loud boos that would get louder at the final buzzer. Boston went on to surpass a 38-point victory by the Clippers over Chicago that had been the NBA's biggest victory this season.

Carmelo Anthony scored 19 points for the Knicks.

HEAT 110, PISTONS 95
AUBURN HILLS, Michigan (AP) — LeBron James had 24 points, nine assists and seven rebounds as Miami cruised past Detroit, avenging a home loss to the Pistons less than a week ago.

Ray Allen added 18 points for the Heat, who were without Dwyane Wade but still shot 56 percent from the field and 11 of 28 from 3-point range. Miami took a 16-5 lead, and although the Pistons fought back, the Heat went on a 13-2 run in the third quarter to make it 74-57.

Andre Drummond had 19

points and 14 rebounds for Detroit, which had its four-game winning streak snapped.

The Pistons beat the Heat 107-97 on Tuesday night.

THUNDER 118, PACERS 94
OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kevin Durant had 36 points and 10 rebounds as Oklahoma City turned a matchup of two of the NBA's best teams into a blowout over Indiana.

The Thunder (15-4) improved to 10-0 at home. Durant was 14 of 23 from the field and Oklahoma City shot a season-best 61 percent (47 of 77). Russell Westbrook finished with 26 points, Reggie Jackson had 15 and Serge Ibaka 13 for the Thunder.

Paul George scored 32 points for the Pacers (18-3), who shot 40 percent (34 of 85).

ROCKETS 98, MAGIC 88

HOUSTON (AP) — Dwight Howard celebrated his 28th birthday in a big way, getting 20 points and 22 rebounds to lead Houston over Orlando.

James Harden scored 27 points and also had 10 assists and eight rebounds for the Rockets. Terrence Jones added 16 points and 13 rebounds. Glenn Davis scored 18 points in Orlando's fifth straight loss. □

Kings acquire Rudy Gay from Toronto

By ANTONIO GONZALEZ

AP Sports Writer

The trade sending Rudy Gay from the Toronto Raptors to the Sacramento Kings is complete.

The teams announced the seven-player deal Monday, less than 24 hours after they reached an agreement. The Raptors received point guard Greivis Vasquez and forwards Patrick Patterson, John Salmons and Chuck Hayes. The Kings also acquired center Aaron Gray and forward Quincy Acy.

Gay, Gray and Acy will not be in uniform when the Kings host the Dallas Mavericks on Monday night. Their first game will likely be against Utah on Wednesday night in Sacramento.

"We're excited to welcome these additions to our team," first-year Kings general manager Pete D'Alessandro said in a statement. "In Rudy we've acquired one of the league's proven scorers while Aaron and Quincy provide size and depth in our frontcourt. We also appreciate the contributions and efforts that John, Chuck, Greivis and Patrick made to the Kings organization. We all wish them the very best moving forward."

The move is the second major one for the Kings already this season as they begin rebuilding under new owner Vivek Ranadive. Sacramento sent Luc Mbah a Moute to Minnesota for

Derrick Williams on Nov. 26. This trade will reshape the roster - and the payroll - even more.

Gay is making \$17.8 million this season. He holds a \$19.3 million player option for the 2014-15 season, which he's widely expected to exercise and not test free agency.

It's just the kind of financial risk Ranadive has said he's willing to take - and the Maloof family that previously owned the team wouldn't - to try to turn the Kings into a winner.

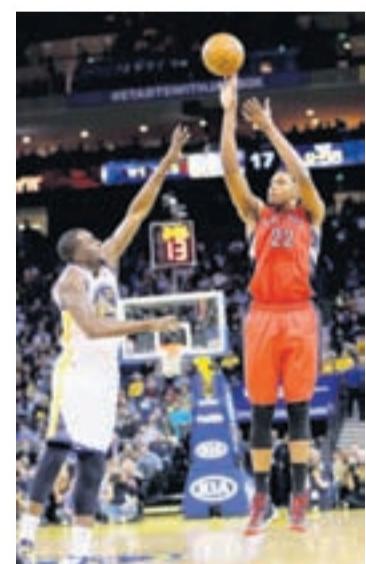
Sacramento (5-13) had lost six straight games until beating the NBA-worst Utah Jazz on Saturday night. The Kings are hoping Gay can provide immediate help

while convincing him to stay long term.

Gay, who was traded from Memphis to Toronto last season, is in his eighth NBA season. He's averaging 18 points, 5.9 rebounds and 2.1 assists in his career.

The deal also shuffles Sacramento's rotation. Isaiah Thomas will likely start at point guard in Vasquez's place, with Jimmer Fredette and rookie Ray McCallum competing for playing time behind him.

For the Raptors, parting ways with Gay gives them future financial flexibility. Of the four players going to Toronto, only Hayes has a deal that extends beyond this season. He's due about \$5.9 million next season. □



Toronto Raptors' Rudy Gay (22) shoots over Golden State Warriors' Draymond Green (23) during the first half of an NBA basketball game on Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

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Capitals' Grubauer stops 30 shots in 1st win

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Jason Chimera, Steve Oleksy and Mikhail Grabovski scored second-period goals to power the Washington Capitals to a 4-1 win over the New York Rangers on Sunday night. Washington defenseman Nate Schmidt added a goal in the third for the Capitals, who beat Nashville at home on Saturday. Schmidt, a 22-year-old rookie, scored his first NHL goal in that game. Grabovski's goal came on a penalty shot.

In his fourth NHL game, Philipp Grubauer made 30 saves for Washington (16-12-2) to earn his first career win. The Capitals have won four of five.

New York (15-15-1), beaten at home in overtime by New Jersey on Saturday, has lost three of five. Henrik Lundqvist made 32 saves, and Benoit Pouliot scored the Rangers' lone goal with 1:53 left to spoil Grubauer's shutout bid.

BLACKHAWKS 6, PANTHERS 2

CHICAGO (AP) — Patrick Sharp had a goal and two assists as Chicago scored a season-high three times on the power play in a win over Florida. The Blackhawks used their potent offense to win after starting goalie Corey Crawford left in the first period because of a lower-body injury.

Marian Hossa, Brent Seabrook and Brandon Saad each had goal and an assist, and Michal Handzus and Andrew Shaw also scored. Patrick Kane had three assists for Chicago, which ended a three-game losing streak — its longest regular-season skid since February 2012.

Rookie Antti Raanta, recalled after veteran backup Nikolai Khabulin was



Washington Capitals goalie Philipp Grubauer (31) of Germany makes a save in the second period of their NHL hockey game against the New York Rangers at Madison Square Garden, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2013, in New York.

injured on Nov. 16, stopped 29 of 31 shots for the win in relief of Crawford, who made four saves.

Dylan Olsen and Goc scored for Florida. Scott Clemmensen made 26 saves in his third start and fifth appearance this season.

WILD 3, SHARKS 1

ST. PAUL, Minnesota (AP) — Josh Harding made 37 saves in another strong home outing as Minnesota beat San Jose despite recording only 13 shots.

Zach Parise scored twice —

once into an empty net — and Mikko Koivu added a goal for the Wild, who have won three of four.

Patrick Marleau scored with 1:41 left for San Jose, which went 1-3 on a four-game trip. The Sharks, who have lost three in a row in regulation for the first time this season, are 0-5-1 in their last six games in Minnesota. Antti Niemi made 10 saves. Parise and Koivu scored second-period goals to give Minnesota a 2-0 lead. Parise pushed the Wild's edge back to two goals

when he scored at 19:54. Harding, who improved to 13-1 at home, is 16-4-3 overall.

BRUINS 5, MAPLE LEAFS 2
TORONTO (AP) — Carl Soderberg and Torey Krug scored second-period power-play goals as Boston defeated Toronto.

The Bruins were coming off a Saturday night win over Pittsburgh in which Shawn Thornton had a takedown of Brooks Orpik. The Bruins were without the suspended Thornton as well as Lou Eriksson and Chris Kelly,

who were both injured in the game.

The Leafs controlled the play early on and led 1-0 after the first on a goal by Peter Holland.

But the Bruins had a three-goal outburst in the second period, including a pair of power-play goals in a 93-second stretch.

Toronto, which also gave up two power-play goals in a win against the Senators on Saturday, went 0 for 4 on the power play Sunday. The Bruins outshot the Leafs 40-32.

Jay McClement also scored for Toronto.

Kevan Miller, Jarome Iginla and Patrice Bergeron also scored for Boston.

CANUCKS 3, AVALANCHE 1

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Mike Santorelli scored two goals and added an assist in Vancouver's victory over Colorado.

The Canucks (17-10-5) earned their fifth win in sixth games and moved within a point of the Avalanche (20-8) in the tight Western Conference standings.

Jean-Sebastien Giguere lost for the first time in eight decisions this season. The Avalanche were beaten for just the third time in nine games.

Ryan Kesler also scored for the Canucks, who were outshot 29-21.

Jamie McGinn had the lone goal for Colorado, scored with only 7.1 seconds left. That kept Roberto Luongo from earning his 65th NHL shutout. He is 14-8-5 this season.

In other NHL Minnesota 3, San Jose 1; Boston 5, Toronto 2; Washington 4, N.Y. Rangers 1; Chicago 6, Florida 2; and Vancouver 3, Colorado 1. □

Cy Young winner Halladay retires after 16 seasons

By ROB MAADDI

AP Sports Writer

That dang Rally Squirrel still haunts Roy Halladay. Citing a desire to avoid surgery for an ailing back and wanting to spend more time with his family, the two-time Cy Young Award winner retired Monday after 16 seasons in the major leagues with the Toronto Blue Jays and Philadelphia Phillies.

Halladay signed a one-day contract to retire as a member of the Blue Jays, where he spent the first 12 years of his career. The



Two-time Cy Young Award winner Roy Halladay answers questions after announcing his retirement after 16 seasons in the major leagues with Toronto and Philadelphia at the MLB winter meetings in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Monday, Dec. 9, 2013.



In this Sept. 14, 2011 file photo, Detroit Tigers' Magglio Ordonez looks out from the dugout during the ninth inning of a baseball game and 6-5 win over the Chicago White Sox, in Chicago.

Associated Press

Former slugger Ordonez elected mayor in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A year after retiring from baseball, former star Magglio Ordonez has been elected as the mayor of a city in his native Venezuela. Ordonez's victory in the city of Sotillo in eastern Venezuela was announced by President Nicolas Maduro at a rally Sunday

for pro-government candidates who won the majority of 335 races nationwide. The socialist president has turned to celebrity candidates such as the six-time All-Star to overcome rising anger with his handling of the economy. Maduro prevailed in his first □

Baseball Hall

Continued from Page 18

After making only one trip to the playoffs in 14 seasons with the New York Mets, St. Louis and Atlanta, Torre guided the Yankees to the postseason in all 12 of his years in New York with a cool, patient demeanor. His popularity rankled Steinbrenner.

"George Steinbrenner changed my life giving me that opportunity at the end of '95," said Torre, the seventh Yankees manager to be elected to the Hall. "He just wanted to win. He felt he owed it to the city. Maybe, the fact I was a New Yorker, it really struck a nerve with me."

Torre finished his career by leading the Los Angeles Dodgers to two NL West titles in three seasons, retiring after 2010 with a record of 2,326-1,997. He's the only manager to have more than 2,000 hits as a

player - he was the 1971 NL MVP - and 2,000 wins in the dugout.

"Joe taught a lot of us about how to win the right way and lose the right way," La Russa said.

The savvy La Russa won World Series titles with Oakland in 1989 and with St. Louis in 2006 and '11, retiring days after beating the Texas Rangers in a seven-game thriller. Of the nine managers with three or more World Series titles, the other seven all have been inducted.

La Russa finished with the third-most wins by a manager in a career that began with the Chicago White Sox in 1979 and ended with a record of 2,728-2,365.

"I miss the winning and losing," La Russa said. "Some day I'll be with a team, I think. I'd like to be part of the competition again." Cox's managerial career began in 1978 with Atlanta, but he was fired after four

seasons - only one above .500. A four-year run in Toronto ended in 1985 with an AL East title, and Ted Turner lured him back to the Braves as their GM. Cox returned to the dugout in 1990, and following one losing season he went on one of the most successful regular-season runs by any skipper, leading the Braves to 14 straight division titles and a World Series championship in 1995.

He retired in 2010 fourth behind La Russa in career wins with a record of 2,504-2,001. Cigar-chomping and fiercely loyal to his players, Cox was ejected a major league record 159 times. Two of his pitchers during the remarkable stretch during the '90s, 300-game winners Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine, head the newcomers on this year's players' ballot. Results of voting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America is scheduled for Jan. 8.

"I just hope Glav and Mad

36-year-old right-hander choked up and held back tears while making the announcement at a news conference at the winter meetings in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

"As a baseball player, you realize that's something you can't do the rest of your life," Halladay said. "I really don't have any regrets. You realize there's other things for you to accomplish in life."

Halladay pitched a perfect game and also a post-season no-hitter. But never made it to the World Series and leaves without the ring he badly wanted.

The Phillies had already won three straight division championships, the 2008 World Series and 2009 NL championship by the time Halladay arrived in a blockbuster trade the same day Philadelphia sent ace Cliff Lee to Seattle in a separate deal.

The Phillies had the best record in the majors in Halladay's first two seasons, but lost to San Francisco in the 2010 NLCS and St.

Louis Cardinals in the 2011 NL division series. In his final post-season performance, Halladay lost to Chris Carpenter and the Cardinals 1-0 in the decisive Game 5 of that 2011 matchup.

Down 2-1 in the series, the Cardinals won two straight to upset the Phillies after a squirrel scampered across home plate as Skip Schumaker batted against Roy Oswalt.

"I think the one thing I took away from that is you can have the best team on paper, you can have the guys who want it the most," Halladay said. "But when the squirrel runs across home plate while your team is trying to pitch, there is nothing you can do about that. So you really start to realize there are a lot of things out of your control. It takes more than nine guys. It takes nine guys, and it takes the 25 on the roster. It takes the coaches, the staff, and it takes a lot of luck." Halladay played for the Phillies from 2010-13, finishing with two injury-plagued seasons. □

Dog can be on the stage with me," Cox said. "That would be the final finishing touch, going in with those two." Miller, the pioneering head of the players' association from 1966-81, was rejected for admission to the Hall for the sixth time he appeared on a committee ballot. He fell one vote short of induction in 2010 and received no more than six votes this year.

"Words cannot adequately describe the level of disappointment and disbelief I felt when learning that once again the Hall of Fame has chosen to ignore Marvin Miller and his unparalleled contributions to the growth and prosperity of Major League Baseball," players' association head Tony Clark said in a statement. "Over the past 50 years, no individual has come close to matching Marvin's impact on the sport."

This year's committee included Hall of Famers Rod

Carew, Carlton Fisk, Whitley Herzog, Tom Lasorda, Paul Molitor, Joe Morgan, Phil Niekro and Frank Robinson; Blue Jays President Paul Beeston; retired club executive Andy MacPhail; Philadelphia President Dave Montgomery; White Sox chairman Jerry Reinsdorf; Steve Hirdt of the Elias Sports Bureau; Bruce Jenkins of the San Francisco Chronicle; BBWAA Secretary-Treasurer Jack O'Connell; and retired Fort Worth Star-Telegram reporter Jim Reeves.

This year's ballot, chosen by a BBWAA-appointed historical overview committee, covers baseball's expansion era. Players, managers, umpires, executives whose most significant impact was from 1973 and later were considered as part of a three-year cycle. The golden era (1947-72) will be voted on in 2014 and the pre-integration era (1871-1946) will be judged in 2015. □

Report: NSA spying on virtual worlds, online games

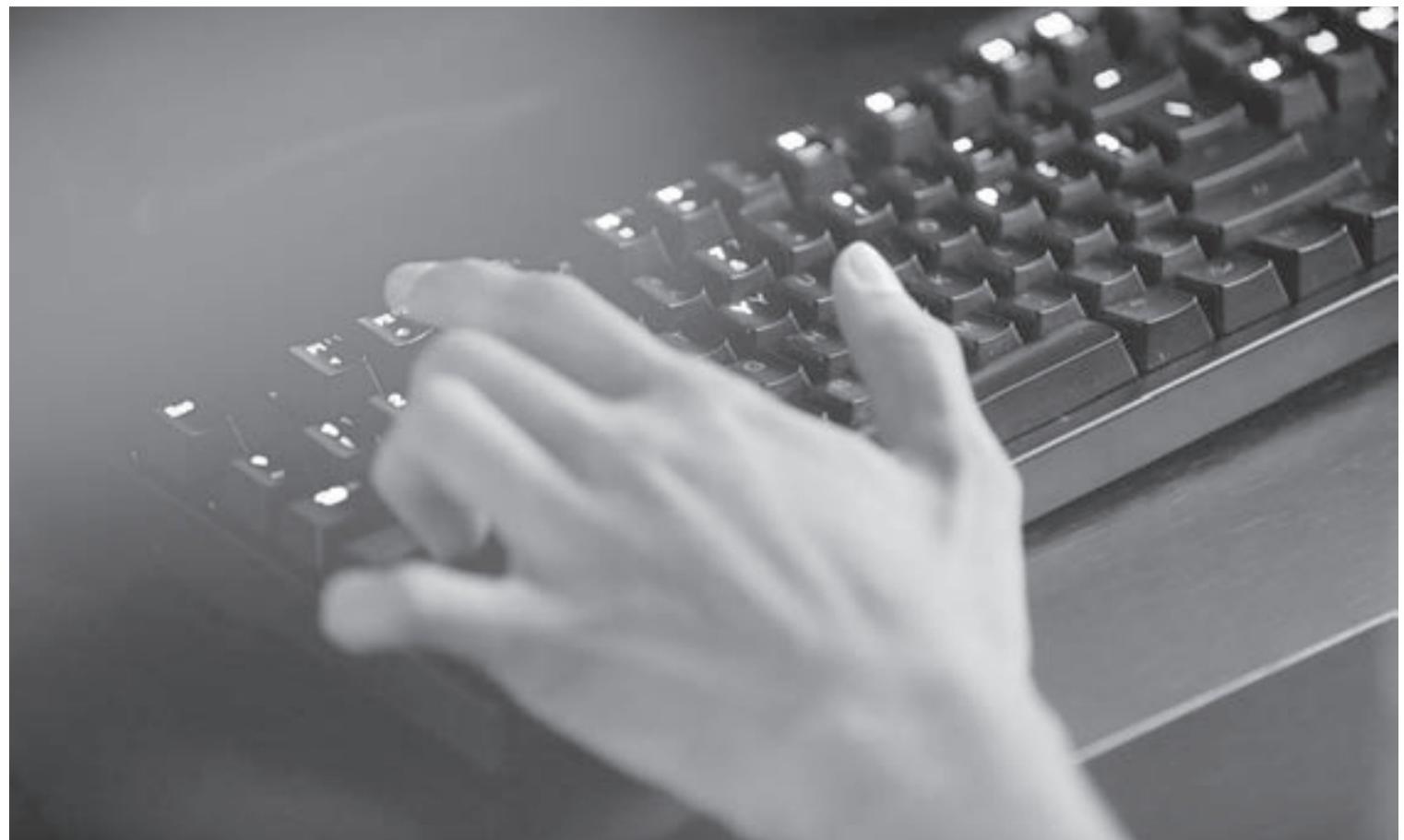
RAPHAEL SATTER
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — American and British intelligence operations have been spying on gamers across the world, media outlets reported, saying that the world's most powerful espionage agencies sent undercover agents into virtual universes to monitor activity in online fantasy games such as "World of Warcraft."

Stories carried Monday by The New York Times, the Guardian, and ProPublica said U.S. and U.K. spies have spent years trawling online games for terrorists or informants. The stories, based on documents leaked by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, offer an unusual take on America's world-spanning surveillance campaign, suggesting that even the fantasy worlds popular with children, teens, and escapists of all ages aren't beyond the attention of the NSA and its British counterpart, GCHQ.

Virtual universes like "World of Warcraft" can be massively popular, drawing in millions of players who log months' worth of real-world time competing with other players for online glory, virtual treasure, and magical loot. At its height, "World of Warcraft" boasted some 12 million paying subscribers, more than the population of Greece. Other virtual worlds, like Linden Labs' "Second Life" or the various games hosted by Microsoft's Xbox — home to the popular science fiction-themed shoot-em-up "Halo" — host millions more. Spy agencies have long worried that such games serve as a good cover for terrorists or other evildoers who could use in-game messaging systems to swap information. In one of the documents cited Monday by media outlets, the NSA warned that the games could give intelligence targets a place to "hide in plain sight."

Linden Labs and Microsoft Inc. did not immediately return messages seeking comment. In a statement, Blizzard Entertainment said that it is "unaware of any



In this Friday, June 21, 2013, file photo, legendary "WarCraft 3" player, Manuel "Grubby" Schenkuizen practices on a player vs. player match inside a special "isolation booth" as eight of the world's best "StarCraft II" video game players train at the Red Bull Training Grounds, at Red Bull North America headquarters in Santa Monica, Calif.

Associated Press

surveillance taking place. If it was, it would have been done without our knowledge or permission."

Microsoft issued a similar statement, saying it is "not aware of any surveillance activity. If it has occurred as reported, it certainly wasn't done with our consent." The 82-page-document, published on The New York Times' website, also noted that opponents could use video games to recruit other users or carry out virtual weapons training — pointing to the Sept. 11, 2001, hijackers as examples of terrorists who had used flight simulation software to hone their skills. Important details — such as how the agencies secured access to gamers' data, how many players' information was compromised, or whether Americans were swept up in the spying — were not clear, the Times and ProPublica said, but the reports point to a determined effort to infiltrate a world many people associate with adolescents and shut-ins.

At the request of GCHQ, the NSA began extracting "World of Warcraft" data from its global intelligence haul, trying to tie specific accounts and characters to Islamic extremism and

arms dealing efforts, the Guardian reported. Intelligence on the fantasy world could eventually translate to real-world espionage success, one of the documents suggested, noting that "World of Warcraft" subscribers included "telecom engineers, embassy

drivers, scientists, the military and other intelligence agencies." "World of Warcraft" wasn't the only target. Another memo noted that GCHQ had "successfully been able to get the discussions between different game players on Xbox Live." Meanwhile, so many

U.S. spies were roaming around "Second Life" that a special "deconfliction" unit was set up to prevent them from stepping on each other's toes.

Blizzard Entertainment is part of Santa Monica, Calif.-based Activision Blizzard Inc. □

German firm testing drones to deliver goods

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Germany's express delivery and mail company Deutsche Post DHL is testing a drone that could be used to deliver urgently needed goods to hard-to-reach places.

The small pilotless helicopter flew a package of medicine Monday from a pharmacy in the town of Bonn to the company's headquarters on the other side of the Rhine River. The aircraft can carry up to 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds).

Company spokesman Thomas Kutsch says the flights all this week are strictly a research project to see if the technology works and there are no plans yet to start actual drone deliveries. The test



A drone with a small parcel flies in front of journalists in Bonn, Germany, Monday Dec. 9, 2013. Germany's express delivery and mail company Deutsche Post DHL is testing a drone that could be used to deliver urgently needed goods to hard-to-reach places.

Associated Press

flights required permission from local aviation authorities.

On-line retailer Amazon is

also working on a drone to deliver goods to customers despite legal obstacles in the U.S. □

EADS to cut 6,000 jobs as budgets dip

NICOLA CLARK

© 2013 New York Times

PARIS - European Aeronautic Defense & Space, the parent company of Airbus, was expected to announce Monday the elimination of up to 6,000 jobs within its military and space divisions over the next three years, people close to the planning process said, as it responds to cuts in European military budgets driven by austerity measures.

The widely anticipated staff cuts, which represent about 5 percent of EADS's global workforce of 133,000 people, were to be presented to union leaders Monday. They would be part of a broad revamping announced last summer that aims to refocus the group's activities on its highly successful commercial jet business, which generates almost 70 percent of its revenue and more than half of its profit. Beginning next year, the entire group is to be rebranded under the Airbus name, reflecting expectations that Airbus' explosive sales growth will continue to outpace its other major divisions, which will be renamed Airbus Defense & Space and Airbus Eurocopter, the group's helicopter business.

The anticipated staff reductions are expected to hit the hardest in Germany, where the bulk of EADS's underperforming military and electronics division, Cassidian, is located. Cassidian employs about 23,000 people, of which around half are in Germany, particularly in and around Munich, the Bavarian capital.

Several thousand EADS workers across Germany took to the streets late last month to protest the expected loss of thousands of well-paid technology jobs at a time when the German economy, which until now has weathered Europe's economic crisis better than most, is starting to show signs of slowing. □

Oil falls slightly; natural gas soars on weather

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The price of oil fell slightly Monday, the first decline in seven trading sessions. Benchmark U.S. crude for January delivery slipped 31 cents to \$97.34 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Oil had gained \$5.35 a barrel, or 5.8 percent, over the pre-

vious six trading days. Meanwhile, natural gas rose above \$4.20 for the first time since May 28, on the likelihood that homeowners turned up the heat to try to shake off the effects of two wintry storms that plowed across the country. Forecasts are for colder than normal temperatures in the Mid-

west this week. Natural gas futures rose 12 cents, or 2.9 percent, to \$4.23 per \$1,000 cubic feet.

U.S. drivers who braved the rough conditions in many areas paid an average of \$3.26 a gallon for gasoline. That's down 9 cents from this time a year ago.

Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils, dropped \$2.22 at \$109.39 a barrel on the ICE Futures exchange in London. In other energy futures trading on Nymex:

- Wholesale gasoline rose 1 cent to \$2.67 a gallon.
- Heating oil lost 4 cents to \$3.01 a gallon. □

S&P 500 index notches another record close

STEVE ROTHWELL

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market notched another record close Monday after a big acquisition in the food industry. Hope for a longer-term budget deal in Washington also helped.

Food distributor Sysco rose the most in the Standard & Poor's 500 index after the company announced an agreement to buy rival US Foods in an \$8.2 billion

Chief Investment Officer of Wilmington Trust Investment Advisors, a unit of Wilmington Trust Bank. The S&P 500 index climbed 3.28 points, or 0.2 percent, to 1,808.37. That put the index a point above its previous record close of 1,807.23 set November 27. Other indexes also made small gains. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 5.33 points, less than 0.1 percent, to 16,025.53. The Nasdaq composite increased

The stock market stuttered in October after political wrangling over the budget caused a 16-day partial government shutdown that crimped economic growth and hurt consumer confidence.

A budget deal "could be viewed as positive, in the sense that it is putting to bed one more possible disruption," Stone said.

In other corporate news, American Airlines rose 65 cents, or 2.7 percent, to

est rates and encouraged investors to buy stocks.

Fed policymakers will meet next week, though few analysts are predicting that they will make changes to their bond-buying program. The meeting runs from Dec. 17 to Dec. 18.

Improvements in the labor market since September last year, when the Fed started its most recent round of stimulus, provided the most powerful argument for reducing bond purchases, St. Louis Fed President James Bullard said on Monday. Bullard, a voting member of the Fed's policy committee, was speaking in St. Louis. In government bond trading, the yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 2.85 percent from 2.86 percent Friday.

In commodities trading, the price of oil fell 31 cents, or 0.3 percent, to \$97.34 a barrel. Gold rose \$5.20, or 0.4 percent, to \$1,234.20 an ounce.

Among other stocks making big moves:

- Twitter climbed \$4.19, or 9.3 percent, to \$49.14, its highest close since going public last month. The company said last week that it was developing its targeted ads based on user's web browsing history.

- Edwards Lifesciences slipped \$3.56, or 5.4 percent, to \$62.73 after the Wall Street Journal reported that the company forecast lower sales of its Sapien heart valves.

- McDonald's fell \$1.08, or 1.1 percent, to \$95.72 after the company said a key sales figure fell last month. Sales at U.S. restaurants open at least a year fell 0.8 percent. □



Allegion Chairman, President and CEO Dave Petritis, center, visits a post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange as his company's stock makes its debut as a standalone, publicly-traded company following its spinoff from Ingersoll Rand, Monday, Dec. 9, 2013.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

deal. Sysco's stock jumped \$3.31, or 9.7 percent, to \$37.62.

Stocks extended a rally from Friday that was driven by a report of solid U.S. job gains. That boosted investor confidence that the economy was growing strongly enough to handle any pullback in the Federal Reserve's economic stimulus.

"We're just continuing the bullishness that we've had," said Rex Macey,

6.23 points, or 0.2 percent, to 4,068.75.

Stocks were also supported by reports that U.S. lawmakers were moving closer to reaching a longer-term budget deal, said Bill Stone, chief investment strategist at PNC Wealth Management Group.

Dick Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate, said Sunday on ABC that budget negotiations are making progress and moving in the right direction.

\$24.60 on the company's first day of trading after completing its merger with US Airways.

There were no major economic reports for investors to focus on. The stock market has climbed to record levels this year as corporations have kept increasing their earnings and the Fed has kept up its \$85 billion-a-month bond purchasing program. The Fed's purchases have pushed up bond prices, lowered inter-

Activist investor plans to up the pressure on Bob Evans

MICHAEL J. de la MERCED
© 2013 New York Times

Last week, Bob Evans Farms announced that it had declined to make strategic changes recommended by one of its biggest investors. Now that investor, the hedge fund Sandell Asset Management, plans to turn up the heat on the restaurant operator.

Sandell intends to announce Monday that it will move for change at Bob Evans, potentially including replacing its directors, according to people briefed on the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the fund's plans.

The hedge fund will begin a so-called consent solicitation, which will let investors vote on changes at Bob Evans outside an annual meeting, the people said. The fund could also seek to amend the restaurateur's bylaws. "While we strongly believe that the inherent value of Bob Evans is far in excess of the company's current share price, we have serious doubts regarding management's ability to realize this value," the hedge fund wrote in a letter that it plans to send to other investors. A representative for Sandell declined to comment. A spokeswoman for Bob Evans referred to comments made by the company's chief executive, Steven A. Davis, on a conference call with analysts last week regarding Sandell's recommendations, which he deemed unlikely to generate value for investors. Sandell's fight against Bob Evans, which runs 561 restaurants and produces packaged foods like sausage, is only one of a growing number of battles being waged in the food industry. Hedge funds are especially keen to shake up restaurant chains whose share performance has lagged as customers have proved reluctant to dine out as much since the recession.

Investors have taken on the parent companies of Applebee's and the Olive Garden, arguing for moves like a big annual dividend, increased cost-cutting and corporate breakups.

The latest plans by Sandell are not surprising, because the \$900 million hedge fund disclosed last month that it had hired a proxy solicitor to advise it on shareholder initiatives like a consent solicitation. But the plans still represent an increasingly aggressive approach by the investor, whose 6.5 percent stake makes it one of the company's three biggest shareholders. The hedge fund's efforts most likely took on added urgency after Bob Evans announced last week that it had considered and rejected borrowing against its stores, deeming the maneuver an expensive bit of financial engineering. The company also disclosed that its profits for the quarter that ended in October had dropped 46 percent, to \$6.1 million, hurt by rising costs and expansion plans.

Sandell disclosed in late September that it wanted Bob Evans to consider options like splitting itself up, borrowing against its real estate holdings and buying back its stock. The hedge fund has said that it believes Bob Evans could be worth more than \$80 a share, far above its current level of \$51.31. It has argued that the company's stock, which had a market value of \$1.4 billion on Friday, trades significantly lower than peers like Cracker Barrel and Dine Equity.

Sandell contends that the factors holding back Bob Evans include its significant real estate holdings. The company owns 86 percent of its restaurants and spends millions of dollars on its Farm Fresh campaign to renovate its locations. Separating the restaurant business from the packaged foods arm could lead to greater operational focus at both, leading to a higher stock price. □

McDonald's key sales metric rises in November

OAK BROOK, Illinois (AP)

— McDonald's said Monday that a key sales figure rose 0.5 percent in November, even as the world's biggest hamburger chain faced tough competition and basically flat traffic in the U.S.

Its global sales performance was the same as in October. The stock slipped in premarket trading.

Sales at stores open at least a year is a key gauge of health because it excludes results from stores recently opened or closed.

The company said that the metric fell 0.8 percent in the U.S. While breakfast items, chicken options and its new expanded value menu did well, that was pressured by intense competition and flat traffic.

In Europe, it increased 1.9 percent on strong performances in the U.K., France and Russia. This was somewhat offset by weakness in Germany.

It declined 2.3 percent in the region including Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and Africa mostly because of softness in Japan.

McDonald's Corp. said that the figure includes sales at all restaurants open at least 13 months, including

those temporarily closed. The lackluster results come as McDonald's faces intensifying competition and changing eating habits. People are increasingly reaching for foods they feel are fresh, healthy or higher quality, with chains such as Chipotle enjoying relatively stronger growth. To keep

ald's is also trying to win over diners with cheaper fare. But its focus on its famous Dollar Menu has been a sore point with franchisees, who are seeing their profit margins hurt as costs for ingredients climb. As such, McDonald's recently revamped the menu as the "Dollar Menu & More,"



A McDonald's restaurant sign sits in front of a McDonald's restaurant in Chicago. McDonald's said Monday that a key sales figure rose 0.5 percent in November, even as the world's biggest hamburger chain faced tough competition and basically flat traffic in the U.S.

(AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

pace, McDonald's has introduced options such as chicken wraps and breakfast sandwiches with egg whites. But the company remains a target for health critics, and changing public perceptions about its food won't be easy.

In the meantime, McDon-

ald's has more than 34,000 locations around the world.

Shares of the Illinois company fell 30 cents to \$96.50 before the market open. □

Sysco to buy US Foods for about \$3.5B

HOUSTON (AP) — One of the largest food supply companies is buying one of its key rivals, creating an even larger, global distribution company.

Sysco is buying privately held US Foods for about \$3.5 billion in cash and stock. When the deal closes, Sysco expects the addition of US Foods to boost its annual sales by about 46 percent to around \$65 billion. Sysco shares jumped as much as 26 percent Monday, setting an all-time high.

Houston's Sysco will pay \$3 billion in common stock and \$500 million in cash. It will also assume or refinance about \$4.7 billion in debt. That puts the total value of the deal at about \$8.2 billion.

Sysco President and CEO Bill DeLaney said that the two companies have high-

ly complementary core strengths including large product portfolios.

For the fiscal year that ended in June, Sysco's sales totaled \$44.41 billion. It trucks food and cooking supplies to about 425,000 customers through 193 locations in the U.S., Bahamas, Canada, Ireland and Northern Ireland. US Foods' customers include independent and chain restaurants, health care and hospitality companies, and government and educational institutions.

Major stakeholders in the company, based just outside of Chicago, in Rosemont, Illinois, include Clayton, Dubilier & Rice LLC and Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. LP.

Representatives from both of those investment firms will join Sysco's board.

When the deal closes, US Foods shareholders will own

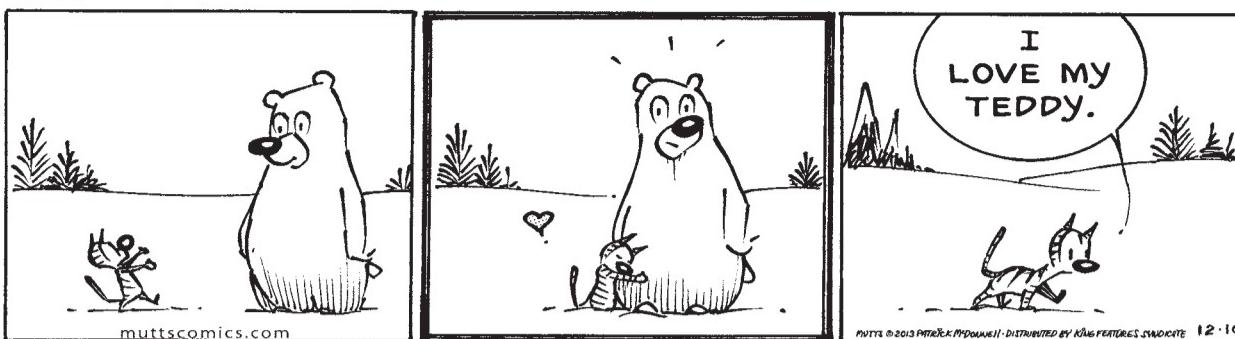
about 87 million shares, or about 13 percent, of Sysco's common stock.

The buyout has been approved by the boards of both companies. Sysco said it expects the deal, which is set to close in the third calendar quarter of 2014, to immediately boost its profit after adjusting for acquisition-related costs and expenses. It's also expected to create annual cost savings of at least \$600 million after three or four years.

Moody's Investors Service placed all of Sysco's ratings, including its investment-grade "A1" long-term rating, under review for possible downgrade.

Moody's said that while the deal makes sense and the price seems fair, a downgrade is likely given the amount of debt Sysco will assume. □

Mutts



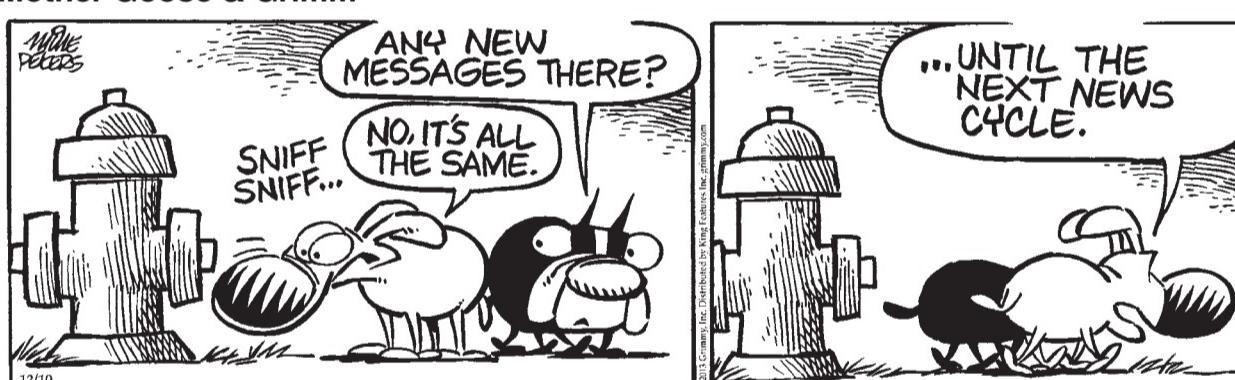
6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	8								9		
3		2							4		5
1		5		6					8		7
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	8		9						3		
	2		7		8				6		
8		7							1		2
9									4		

Difficulty Level ★★

12/10

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

7	6	4	2	5	8	9	3	1			
9	8	3	1	7	6	5	2	4			
2	5	1	3	9	4	7	6	8			
4	3	9	5	6	7	8	1	2			
8	1	7	4	3	2	6	5	9			
6	2	5	8	1	9	4	7	3			
5	4	6	9	2	1	3	8	7			
3	9	2	7	8	5	1	4	6			
1	7	8	6	4	3	2	9	5			

Yesterday's puzzle answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13		14	15						16		
17			18						19		
20		21	22						23		
26	27	28	29	30					31	32	33
34		35							36		
37		38							39		
40		41							42		
43		44							45		
46		47							48		
51	52	53							54	55	
56		57							58		59
61		62							63		
64		65									

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/10/13

Monday's Puzzle Solved

SOBER	SLAP	CASS									
OPINE	TONE	OVEN									
BELLE	ONTO	LONE									
SNEAKING	PRAISE										
CITE	SLANDER										
HELENA	AMEND										
IVY	GLARE	GENES									
NERD	YIELD	RAVE									
TREES	SALON	PEA									
GOALS	MOMENT										
APPROVE	FETA										
CREATE	BUSINESS										
TOAD	RAID	CURIE									
ONCE	SING	EAGLE									
REED	EDGE	SLOOP									

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12/10/13

- 3 In the past
4 Drink
5 Actress and author Farr
6 Wheel support
7 ___ in; corners
8 Epic traveler
9 One who dies for his beliefs
10 Follow orders
11 Paper ___; page fastener
51 Stress
56 "See no ___; hear no ___"
57 Parking lot employee
58 Unpopular kid
60 Home of twigs
61 Make laugh
62 Music's Lady
63 Genealogist's drawing
64 Goes on & on
65 Hit a tennis ball in a high arc
DOWN
1 ___ Maria"
2 College official
35 Dinner in a sty
38 Very ancient
39 Swordplay
41 Fraternity letter
42 Asian nation
44 Slender
45 Babbles
47 Trunk
48 Camp shelter
49 All ___; finished
50 Get up
52 Family member
53 Adder's sign
54 Ardor
55 Therefore
59 Bry/cream amount

A global dining empire loses an outpost

JANE PERLEZ

© 2013 New York Times

BEIJING - The last meal at Maison Boulud in China, at least for now, was served on Sunday.

The restaurant, run by the New York chef Daniel Boulud in the former U.S. Embassy not far from Tiananmen Square, closed after five years, the victim of a falling out with Chinese partners and perhaps the staid habits of Beijing.

At brunch on Sunday, patrons from 7 to 70 dined on golden chicken from Dongbei in northern China and plump shrimp from the Yellow Sea. Gray skies cast a soft light through tall windows into the dining room of the mansion constructed in 1903 as one of the first Western-style buildings in Beijing, the capital.

The guests, including women dressed in pearls and high heels, men in sweaters and jeans and two children, Audrey, 7, and Alex, 13, who with their mother, Ly Vu, have been frequent patrons, all gathered to say farewell.

"We adore the restaurant, the ambience and the service," said Vu, a Vietnamese American living in Beijing, as she and her children finished eating a chicken that had been carved at the table by the executive chef, Brian Reimer. "We love the juicy chicken with crispy skin," she said. "The dining room is homey yet elegant. It's very sad it is closing."

For Boulud's dining empire, now at 13 restaurants, including establishments in Singapore, London and Toronto, a closing is unusual. A venture in Las Vegas shut in 2010 but another is set to open there, said Brett Traussi, director of operations for the Dinex Group, which manages the Boulud gourmet brand.

Beijing is known as a tough restaurant town, a place of politicians and bureaucrats, banquet halls and back-room deals. Shanghai is China's boisterous city, still nurturing the traditions left over from the Europeans who lived and



Executive chef Brian Reimer works the stove the Maison Boulud restaurant in Beijing, Dec. 8, 2013. The restaurant, run by the New York chef Daniel Boulud in the former American Embassy not far from Tiananmen Square, closed Sunday after five years, the victim of a falling out with Chinese partners and perhaps the staid habits of Beijing.

(Sim Chi Yin/The New York Times)

played there in the 1920s and '30s.

Along the Bund in Shanghai, at least five European restaurants, lavishly decorated and with sparkling views of the Yangtze River, vie for expense account customers. In Beijing, where foreign diplomats are penurious and government officials prefer Chinese restaurants, there were three distinguished Western eateries. Now there are two.

"Shanghai is pragmatic, moves faster and is more business focused," said Michelle Garnaut, chief executive of the M Restaurant Group, which runs M

on the Bund in Shanghai, and Capital M, one of the surviving Western-style restaurants in Beijing.

"Let's hope Boulud finds somewhere else in Beijing," Garnaut said. "It has been an excellent restaurant."

Boulud has not given up on the Beijing restaurant scene. "Our partners have other ambitions for the building," he said in a telephone interview from Lyon, France. "Beijing is becoming a very cool place. I've always liked Beijing. I want the setup to be right, the partners to be right."

Maison Boulud had a certain cachet because of

its home in the two-story structure that served as the U.S. Embassy from the early 1900s to the late '30s; it was one of the first buildings in the capital to use imported steel and lumber from the United States.

Newspaper accounts from the period note that Sidney H. Nealy, an architect for the State Department, designed the chancery, separate residences, servants' quarters and an ice factory. □

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Earth's atmosphere to take beating at World Cup

JOHN LEICESTER

AP Sports Writer

SALVADOR, Brazil (AP) — The World Cup may be great for planet soccer, but it isn't so good for planet Earth.

FIFA says the 2014 tournament, which will require huge amounts of air travel to venues across Brazil, will produce the equivalent of 2.72 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas.

That means staging the monthlong tournament will produce as much carbon dioxide as 560,000 passenger cars do in one year, according to the greenhouse gas calculator on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's website.

In an effort to curb pollution, FIFA will finance such projects as tree planting trees, which help reduce carbon emissions. FIFA's head of corporate social responsibility, Federico Addiechi, said in an interview that the ruling body will be spending several million dollars.

Teams, spectators, officials and others will have to crisscross the world's fifth-largest country, mostly by air, because the 64 World Cup matches are scattered across 12 stadiums.

Fans will produce about 90 percent of World Cup carbon emissions, Addi-



In this Sept. 11, 2013 photo released by Portal da Copa 2014, aerial view of the Galeao international airport, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Brazil has decided against opening more routes for foreign air carriers for next year's World Cup. According to Civil Aviation Secretary Wellington Moreira Franco, Brazilian carriers can handle the more than 3.6 million expected soccer fans traveling to the 12 host cities.

Associated Press

echi said. The rest — about 251,000 tons — is directly from FIFA's activities. That includes travel for teams, referees, FIFA officials, carbon produced by their hotels, the use of stadiums and other tournament-related activities.

"We're going to offset 100 percent of those emissions," Addiechi said.

That could be done by financing reforestation in Brazil, wind farms, hydroelectric plants or other

projects. The projects will be announced next year. Addiechi said they will cost FIFA about \$2.5 million, which is still just a fraction of the billions expected in World Cup revenue.

A FIFA-commissioned study breaks down World Cup emissions like this:

—213,706 tons from the Confederations Cup tournament in June.

—38,048 tons from other preparations, including last week's draw, which

required more than 3,000 guests and journalists to trek to a huge tent erected at a remote beach resort on Brazil's Atlantic coast. That draw alone produced an estimated 5,221 tons of carbon.

"Although it could have been more sustainable, this trip to Brazil this time, at least we are going to offset it," Addiechi said.

—2.47 million tons from the World Cup next June and July, for a total of 2.72 mil-

lion tons.

"If you compare this to the emissions of other industries, it is nothing," Addiechi said.

The Ford Motor Co. calculates that its plants around the world emitted 5.1 million tons of carbon in 2012. The EPA calculates that the average American home emits 20 tons per year and that the United States' coal-burning power plants each produce about 3.5 million tons annually.

The 2010 World Cup in South Africa also required large amount of travel, as will the 2018 edition in Russia.

"We need to develop the game of football, that means that people are traveling around the world," Addiechi said. "Otherwise we have to stop doing what we are doing and I don't think that's in everyone's interests."

Within FIFA, he said he acts as its environmental watchdog, asking such questions as: "Do we really need this? Do we really need such a big tent? Do we really need to go there?"

"Those are my arguments," he said. "But there are other arguments and we need to accept that they are sometimes as important as the environmental and social ones." □

Invasive cockroach found in NYC can take the cold

FRANK ELTMAN

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The High Line, a park that turned a dilapidated stretch of elevated railway on Manhattan's West Side into one of New York's newest tourist attractions, may have brought a different kind of visitor: a cockroach that can withstand harsh winter cold and never seen before in the U.S. Rutgers University insect biologists Jessica Ware and Dominic Evangelista said the species *Periplaneta japonica* is well documented in Asia but was never confirmed in the United States until now. The scientists, whose findings were published in



In this Jan. 9, 2013 photo provided by the University of Florida, both male, left, and female *Periplaneta japonica* are shown. The *Periplaneta japonica* is a new strain of cockroach possessing powers to withstand harsh winter cold. The species has never been seen before in the United States, but has invaded New York City. Scientists say that while it is too soon to predict the insect's impact, there is probably little cause for concern.

Associated Press

the Journal of Economic Entomology, say that it is too soon to predict the impact but that there is probably little cause for concern. "Because this species is very similar to cockroach species that already exist in the urban environment," Evangelista said, "they likely will compete with each other for space and for food." That competition, Ware said, will likely keep the population low, "because more time and energy spent competing means less time and energy to devote to reproduction." Michael Scharf, a professor of urban entomology at Purdue University, said the discov-

ery is something to monitor. "To be truly invasive, a species has to move in and take over and out-compete a native species," he said. "There's no evidence of that, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't be concerned about it." The newcomer was first spotted in New York in 2012, by an exterminator working on the High Line. The scientists suspect the little critter was likely a stowaway in the soil of ornamental plants used to adorn the park. "Many nurseries in the United States have some native plants and some imported plants," Ware said. "It's not a far stretch to picture that that is the source." □

Fran Drescher heading to Broadway's 'Cinderella'

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Cinderella's evil stepmom is about to be replaced by "The Nanny." Producers of "Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella" said Monday that Fran Drescher will make her Broadway debut Feb. 4 in the show, playing Cinderella's stepmother. Drescher's 10-week run ends April 13. Drescher, an Emmy Award winner for "The Nanny" and whose film credits include "The Cadillac Man" and "This is Spinal Tap," takes over the role created by Harriet Harris. Drescher has been onstage before, including roles in Nora Ephron's "Love, Loss, and What I Wore," Neil LaBute's "Some Girl(s)" and Ronald



This June 27, 2013 file photo shows actress Fran Drescher at the "Helmut Newton: White Women - Sleepless Nights - Big Nudes" exhibit opening at the Annenberg Space Photography in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Ribman's "Rug Merchants of Chaos" at The Pasadena Playhouse. The Tony-nominated musical has been given a makeover

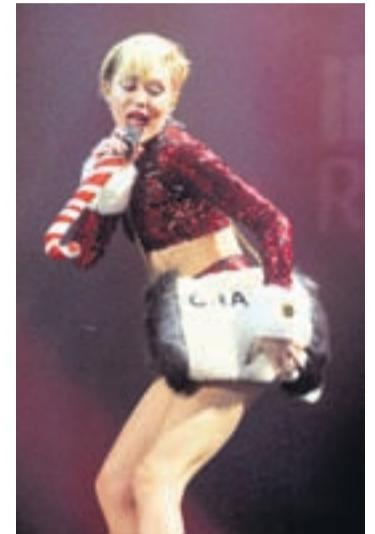
by Douglas Carter Beane, who has turned the fairy tale into a charming, witty story updated for a new generation. □

MTV declares Miley Cyrus its artist of the year

NEW YORK (AP) — Here's something to wag a tongue at: MTV says Miley Cyrus is the best artist of the year.

The former child star twerked her way to the top. Her eye-popping duet with Robin Thicke on the MTV Video Music Awards was one of the year's most talked about cultural events.

MTV said Monday the VMA duet on "We Can't Stop" and "Blurred Lines" was the year's most watched video on MTV websites. Similarly, the MTV artist site devoted to Cyrus had more visits than any other artist's. □



This Dec. 6, 2013 file photo shows Miley Cyrus performing during the KIIS-FM Jingle Ball concert at Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Danica Patrick revs up for ACAs hosting gig

CHRIS TALBOTT,
AP Music Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — When her agent pitches a new project, Danica Patrick usually makes her decisions on the spot — yes or no — with little hesitation. When the producers of the American Country Awards called and asked if she'd co-host the show, the NASCAR driver took her foot off the gas pedal.

"This is one of the first things where I said, 'You know, let me think about that,'" Patrick said. "I just was nervous about doing it, and I kind of wanted to get a few people's opinion: Do you think I can handle this? But they made me feel really comfortable. A few months ago I met with the producers and they said it's going to be easy and you're going to have fun with it. Hopefully they're right."

Patrick will find out when she co-hosts the live Fox broadcast (8 p.m. EST) Tuesday night in Las Vegas with Trace Adkins. Taylor Swift leads all nominees with eight, while Blake Shelton and Florida Georgia Line are up for seven

apiece during the fourth annual awards show.

Patrick knows all these names after an 18-month crash course in country music that's left her with the ability to name-check just about everybody in the genre. She says she never really gave country a chance growing up in northern Illinois with an avowed rock 'n' roll fan for a dad. But Miranda Lambert changed all that. Lambert invited Patrick to appear in the 2012 video for her hit "Fastest Girl in Town." It sounded like fun so Patrick signed up. But when she arrived, she was embarrassed to admit she wasn't familiar with Lambert's music.

"So I felt bad and I was like, 'I should listen to some of her music,' so I got her new album and got her Pistol Annies album, and I was like, 'Man, I think I like country music,'" Patrick said in a phone interview. "I was very ignorant about it, but now I know everything on the radio. I used to listen to more sort of pop, your Katy Perry, (pop) chart music. But now I look at the country top 20 and I



In this May 11, 2013 file photo, driver Danica Patrick high fives fans during driver introductions before the start of the NASCAR Sprint Cup series auto race at Darlington Raceway, in Darlington, S.C. New country music fan Patrick will co-host the American Country Awards Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2013, on FOX with Trace Adkins.

Associated Press

know every single one and I know maybe two of them on the Top 20 pop chart. I would definitely say I've transitioned over."

She went on to pass a pop quiz on her favorites, listing Lambert's husband, Shelton, Jason Aldean, Thomas Rhett, The Band Perry, Jake Owen and Lady Antebellum.

Patrick is trying something new in television as well. Long a popular personality and spokeswoman, the driver has done thousands of hours of interviews and commercial shots, and even co-hosted "The View," but acknowledges she's got a lot to learn — and precious few practice laps before the show starts. □

"I don't think hosting dinner at my house really counts," Patrick said. "I'm looking forward to it, and with a guy like Trace who's done it for a few years and is such a cool, relaxed guy and so well-known and respected in the music industry, and he has a great personality. We're going to have fun." □

U.S. study: Network TV can be as violent as cable

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Violence on American broadcast TV networks' dramas can equal the graphic gore of more notorious cable shows like "The Walking Dead," though they carry milder parental cautions, a new U.S. study found.

Scenes of stabbings, shootings, rape, decapitation and mutilation invariably received a TV-14 "parents strongly cautioned" rating on network TV, according to the Parents Television Council study released Monday.

But similar fare on cable TV typically was given the most stringent label, TV-MA for mature audiences only, researchers for the media watchdog group found.

"There are zero-point-zero series rated TV-MA on broadcast," said the media watchdog council President Tim Winter, despite programs that are awash in violent scenes.

It is vital to examine the media's effect on children and real-world violence, Winter said, adding that he hopes his nonpartisan group's findings are part of a wide-ranging search for solutions. The study of 14 series during a four-week period found a 6 percent difference in the overall incidence of violence of all types on cable versus broadcast, with 1,482 violent acts on the cable programs and 1,392 on the network series.

Federally regulated broadcasters face sanctions if they cross the line on indecency or expletives but not violence. With competition from unregulated cable and its variously dar-



This file image released by NBC shows, from left, Tracy Spiridakos as Charlie Matheson, Billy Burke as Miles Matheson, Daniella Alonso as Nora, and Paras Patel as Albert, in a scene from "Revolution."

Associated Press

ing series such as "Breaking Bad" and "Masters of Sex," networks have resorted to more mayhem.

Episode ratings are decided by networks and cable channels, similar to how the movie studios' Motion Picture Association of America self-governs by issuing its own movie ratings. The TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board, which is composed of TV industry members and public interest advocates, checks for ratings uniformity and responds to public complaints. It received 38 complaints in the past year.

The ratings system "serves as a valuable resource for parents and helps them make responsible viewing decisions based on what is appropriate for their own families. The industry regu-

larly reviews the TV ratings to ensure they continue to be useful to parents," Miss Tessier, spokeswoman for the board's executive secretariat, said in response to the PTC study.

NBC, CBS, Fox and CW did not comment on the study, which did not include any ABC shows.

Under political and social pressure in the mid-1990s, the voluntary system was established by the TV industry to be used with the so-called V-chip that can block shows electronically. Networks find it financially vital to avoid applying TV-MA ratings, Winters said, which scare off advertisers. To assess how the ratings are used, the PTC said it analyzed the seven shows each on cable and broadcast TV that had the high-

est levels of violence. Each show's first four episodes of the 2012-13 season were analyzed.

TV-14 warns that a program may include intense violence, sex or language not suitable for children under 14, while TV-MA is intended for shows that might have indecent language, graphic violence or explicit sexuality, according to the TV Parental Guidelines webpage.

The PTC study defined graphic as "especially vivid, brutal and realistic acts of violence" that are explicitly depicted. Among the network examples cited:

— A bar fight scene on NBC's "Revolution" in which a character wields a sword and a dagger to slash open a man's chest, cut another's neck and stab a third in

the chest. The blood-splattered character pulls his sword from the last victim's body.

— CW's "Supernatural," in which a trail of blood leads to the bodies of two priests impaled on a cemetery's wrought-iron fence. Their eyes have been gouged out and blood drips down their faces.

— A woman is tortured in captivity, with an implanted camera sending images of her agony online in an episode of CBS' "Criminal Minds." An FBI agent watches as a hammer is driven into the victim's head.

Depictions of shootings, stabbings and dismemberment were found on cable shows including AMC's "The Walking Dead" and "Breaking Bad" and FX's "Sons of Anarchy." Five of the seven cable shows had TV-MA ratings, with "Walking Dead" eventually switching from TV-14 to MA.

Other broadcast shows in the study included NBC's "The Blacklist," Fox's "Sleepy Hollow," CBS' "CSI" and NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit."

Although administered differently, movie ratings have also been criticism for being soft on violence. A study last month found the number of scenes featuring gun violence in PG-13 movies has come to rival or surpass the rate of such action in R-rated projects.

The PTC's Winter said his group's study, taken together with the movie report, "starts to weave together a fabric that urgently needs a public response." □

'Blackfish' prompts Heart to cancel SeaWorld gig

MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)

— The rock bands Heart and Barenaked Ladies along with country singer Willie Nelson have canceled their planned performances at SeaWorld in Florida, citing a recent documentary that raises questions about the effects of captivity on whales. Heart was the latest act in the past week to cancel appearances

at SeaWorld Orlando's Bands, Brew & Barbecue music series in February, making their announcement over the weekend. The series is held over several weekends and features top classic rock and country acts. A posting on Heart's official Twitter page said the decision was influenced by the recently-released documentary "Blackfish." The documentary raises questions about the effects of

captivity on killer whales at marine parks such as SeaWorld. Nelson and Barenaked Ladies made their decisions after fans launched Change.org petitions urging them not to perform at SeaWorld. SeaWorld spokesman Nick Gollattscheck said in a statement that marine park officials respect the performers' decisions but added that they were disappointed that "a small group of misinformed in-

dividuals" was able to influence the performers. "The bands and artists have a standing invitation to visit any of our parks to see firsthand or to speak to any of our animal experts to learn for themselves how we care for animals and how little truth there is to the allegations made by animal extremist groups opposed to the zoological display of marine mammals," Gollattscheck said.

"Blackfish" explores what may have caused Tilikum, a 12,000-pound (5,445-kilogram) orca, to kill three people, including veteran SeaWorld trainer Dawn Brancheau in 2010. She was killed when Tilikum pulled her into a pool. The documentary released this year chronicles past incidences of killer whales in captivity acting aggressively toward human trainers and other orcas. □

The Irony Of Mental Despair



DAVID BROOKS
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We've made some progress in understanding mental illnesses over the past few decades, and even come up with drugs to help ameliorate their effects. But we have not made any headway against suicide.

According to the World Health Organization, global suicide rates have increased by 60 percent over the past 45 years. The increase in this country is nothing like that, but between 1999 and 2010 the suicide rate among Americans between 35 and 64 rose by 28 percent. More people die by suicide than by auto accidents.

When you get inside the numbers, all sorts of correlations pop out. Whites are more likely to commit suicide than African-Americans or Hispanics. Economically stressed and socially isolated people are more likely to commit suicide than those who are not. People in the Western American states are more likely to kill themselves than people in the Eastern ones. People in France are more likely to kill themselves than people in the United Kingdom.

But people don't kill themselves in bundles. They kill themselves, for the most part, one by one. People who attempt suicide are always subject to sociological risk factors, but they need an idea or story to bring them to the edge of suicide and to justify their act. If you want to prevent suicide, of course, you want to reduce unemployment and isolation, but you also want to attack the ideas and stories that seem to justify it.

Some people commit suicide because their sense of their own identity has dissolved. Some people do it because they hate themselves. Some feel unable to ever participate in the world. The writer Annie Sexton wrote the following before her own suicide:

"Now listen, life is lovely, but I Can't Live It. ... To be alive, yes, alive, but not be able to live it. Ay, that's the rub. I am like a stone that lives ... locked outside of all that's real. ... I wish, or think I wish, that I were dying of something, for then I could be brave, but to be not dying and

yet ... and yet to (be) behind a wall, watching everyone fit in where I can't, to talk behind a gray foggy wall, to live but ... to do it all wrong. ... I'm not a part. I'm not a member. I'm frozen."

In her eloquent and affecting book "Stay: A History of Suicide and the Philosophies Against It," Jennifer Michael Hecht presents two big counterideas that she hopes people contemplating potential suicides will keep in their heads. Her first is that "Suicide is delayed homicide." Suicides happen in clusters, with one person's suicide influencing the other's. If a parent commits suicide, his or her children are three times as likely to do so at some point in their lives. In the month after Marilyn Monroe's overdose, there was a 12 percent increase in suicides across America. People in the act of committing suicide may feel isolated, but, in fact, they are deeply connected to those around. As Hecht put it, if you want your niece to make it through her dark nights, you have to make it through yours.

Her second argument is that you owe it to your future self to live.

A 1978 study tracked down 515 people who were stopped from jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. Decades later, Hecht writes, "94 percent of those who had tried to commit suicide on the bridge were still alive or had died of natural causes."

Suicide is an act of chronological arrogance, the assumption that the impulse of the moment has a right to dictate the judgment of future decades.

I'd only add that the suicidal situation is an ironical situation. A person enters the situation amid feelings of powerlessness and despair, but once in the situation the potential suicide has the power to make a series of big points before the world. By deciding to live, a person in a suicidal situation can prove that life isn't just about racking up pleasure points; it is a vale of soul-making, and suffering can be turned into wisdom. A person in that situation can model endurance and prove to others that, as John Milton put it, "They also serve who only stand and wait."

That person can commit to live to redeem past mistakes. That person can show that we are not completely self-determining creatures, and do not have the right to choose when we end our participation in the common project of life.

The blackness of the suicidal situation makes these rejoinders stand out in stark relief. And, as our friend Nietzsche observed, he who has a why to live for can withstand any how. □



Obama Gets Real



PAUL KRUGMAN
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Much of the media commentary on President Barack Obama's big inequality speech was cynical. You know the drill: It's yet another "reboot" that will go nowhere; none of it will have any effect on policy, and so on. But before we talk about the speech's possible political impact or lack thereof, shouldn't we look at the substance? Was what the president said true? Was it new? If the answer to these questions is yes - and it is - then what he said deserves a serious hearing.

And once you realize that, you also realize that the speech may matter a lot more than the cynics imagine.

First, about those truths: Obama laid out a disturbing - and, unfortunately, all too accurate - vision of an America losing touch with its own ideals, an erstwhile land of opportunity becoming a class-ridden society. Not only do we have an ever-growing gap between a wealthy minority and the rest of the nation; we also, he declared, have declining mobility, as it becomes harder and harder for the poor and even the middle class to move up the economic ladder. And he linked rising inequality with falling mobility, asserting that Horatio Alger stories were becoming rare precisely because the rich and the rest were now so far apart.

This isn't entirely new terrain for Obama. What struck me about this speech, however, was what

he had to say about the sources of rising inequality. Much of our political and pundit class remains devoted to the notion that rising inequality, to the extent that it's an issue at all, is all about workers lacking the right skills and education. But the president now seems to accept progressive arguments that education is at best one of a number of concerns, that America's growing class inequality largely reflects political choices, like the failure to raise the minimum wage along with inflation and productivity.

And because the president was willing to assign much of the blame for rising inequality to bad policy, he was also more forthcoming than in the past about ways to change the nation's trajectory, including a rise in the minimum wage, restoring labor's bargaining power, and strengthening, not weakening, the safety net.

And there was this: "When it comes to our budget, we should not be stuck in a stale debate from two years ago or three years ago. A relentlessly growing deficit of opportunity is a bigger threat to our future than our rapidly shrinking fiscal deficit." Finally! Our political class has spent years obsessed with a fake problem - worrying about debt and deficits that never posed any threat to the nation's future - while showing no interest in unemployment and stagnating wages. Obama, I'm sorry to say, bought into that diversion. Now, however, he's moving on.

Still, does any of this matter? The conventional pundit wisdom of the moment is that Obama's presidency has run aground, even that he has become irrelevant. But this is silly. In fact, it's silly in at least three ways.

First, much of the current conventional wisdom involves extrapolating from Obamacare's shambolic start, and assuming that

things will be like that for the next three years. They won't. HealthCare.gov is working much better, people are signing up in growing numbers, and the whole mess is already receding in the rear-view mirror.

Second, Obama isn't running for re-election. At this point, he needs to be measured not by his poll numbers but by his achievements, and his health reform, which represents a major strengthening of America's social safety net, is a huge achievement. He'll be considered one of our most important presidents as long as he can defend that achievement and fend off attempts to tear down other parts of the safety net, like food stamps. And by making a powerful, cogent case that we need a stronger safety net to preserve opportunity in an age of soaring inequality, he's setting himself up for exactly such a defense.

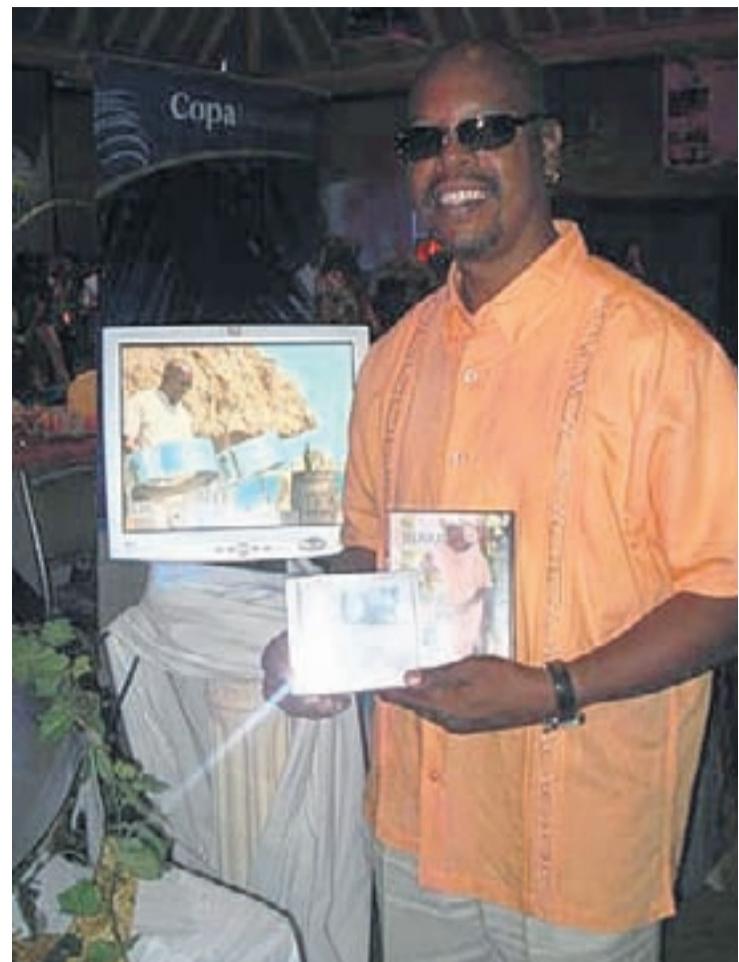
Finally, ideas matter, even if they can't be turned into legislation overnight. The wrong turn we've taken in economic policy - our obsession with debt and "entitlements," when we should have been focused on jobs and opportunity - was, of course, driven in part by the power of wealthy vested interests. But it wasn't just raw power. The fiscal scolds also benefited from a sort of ideological monopoly: For several years you just weren't considered serious in Washington unless you worshipped at the altar of Simpson and Bowles.

Now, however, we have the president of the United States breaking ranks, finally sounding like the progressive many of his supporters thought they were backing in 2008. This is going to change the discourse - and, eventually, I believe, actual policy.

So don't believe the cynics. This was an important speech by a president who can still make a very big difference. □

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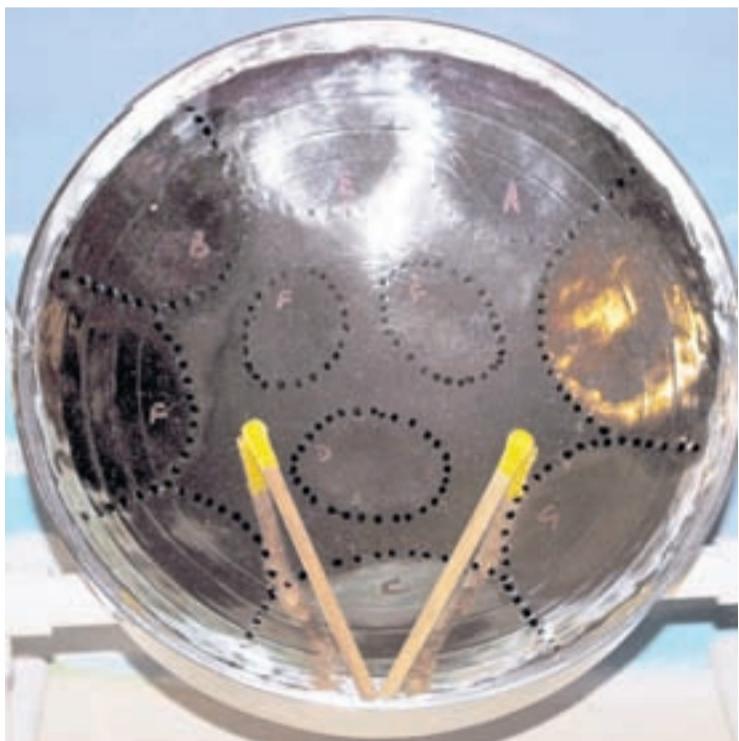
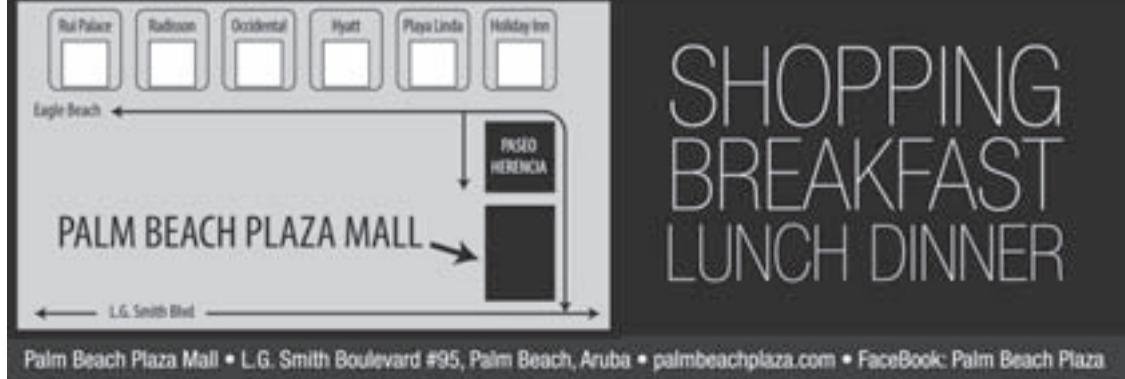
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PALM BEACH - Nico Connor, a second generation steel pan recording artist who is one of the 2 performing sons of the late Edgar Connor, Aruba steel pan pioneer who obviously shared his talent with his sons.

Nico has been surrounded by (steel pan) music and was in love with the sound from a young age, his mother Gloria Connor the great arranger of the famous invaders steel band gave him a saxophone that's still at his side but his steel pans have always had his priority in any form or music.

Together with his also talented brother Lee brought a new trade wind to steel pan music, arrangements and performing. As a steel pan performer/label owner he's always looking for the next step to add to his virtuosity groovy sounds, and expand his musical journey beyond the horizon.

The all-star band will be performing at Palm Beach Plaza Mall every Tuesday Night from 8pm to 10pm! We invite you to come and experience Aruba's heritage on Steel Pan Music, tonight at Palm Beach Plaza Mall. □